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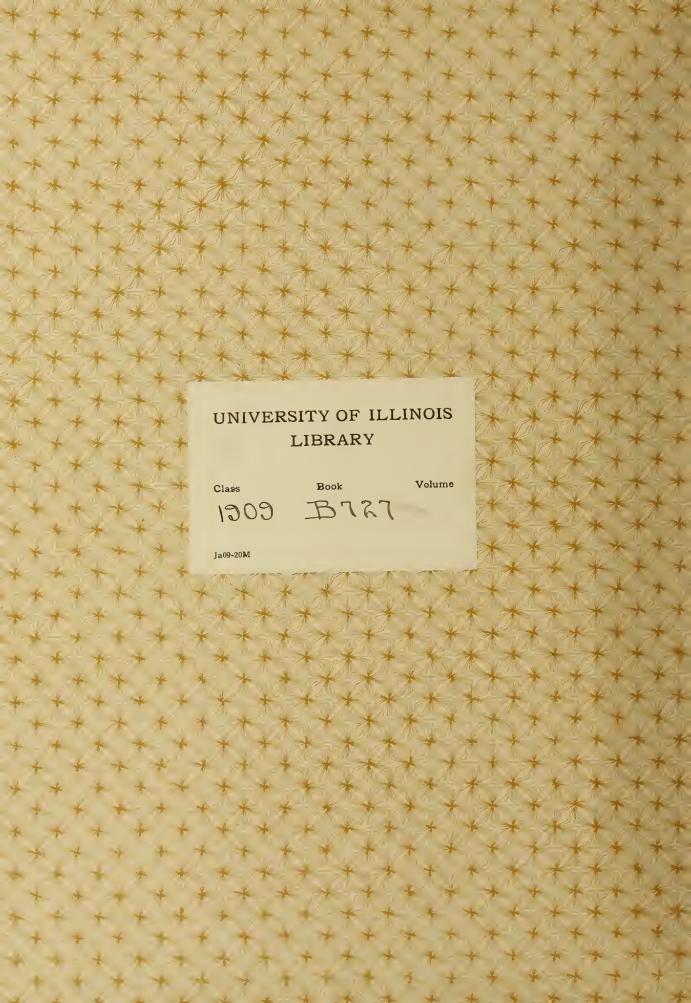
The Influence of Goldsmith upon Goethe

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THE INFLUENCE OF GOLDSMITH UPON GOETHE

BY

BERNICE MARGARET BRADFORD

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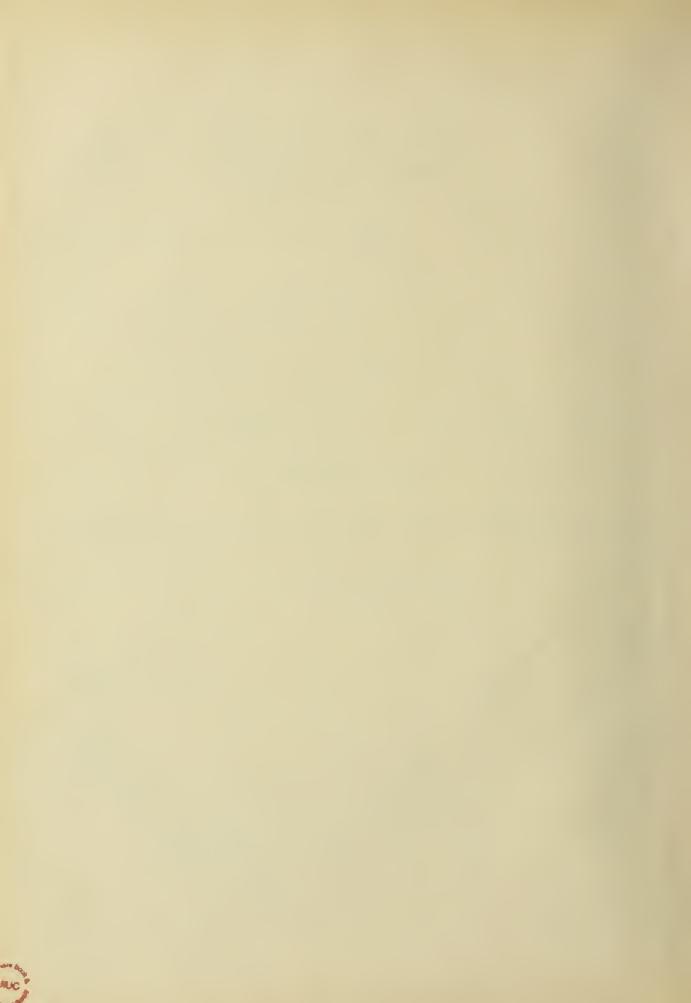
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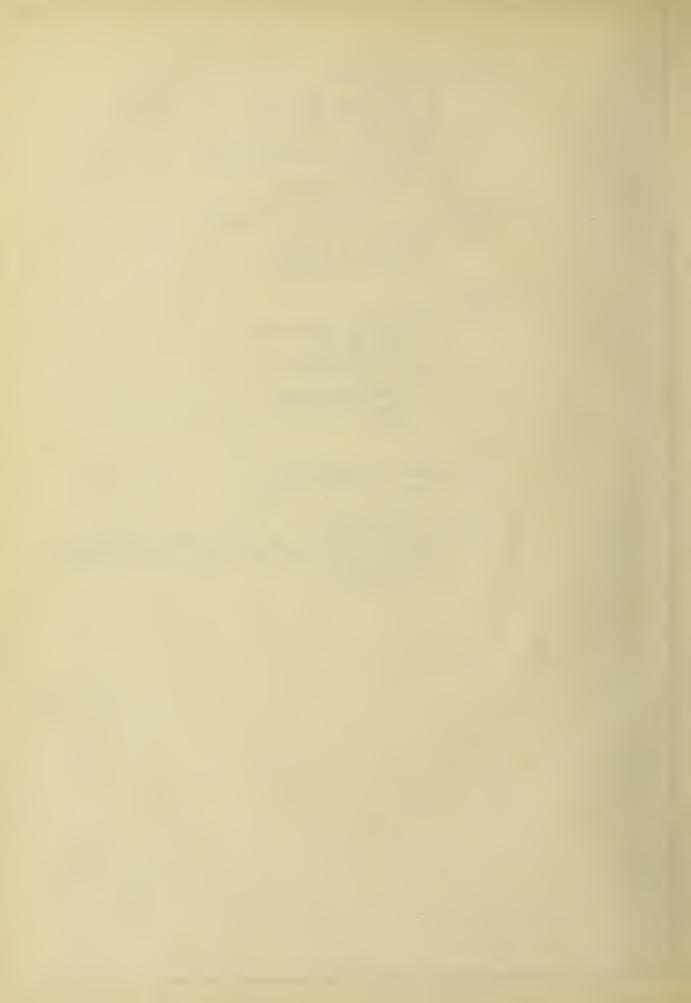
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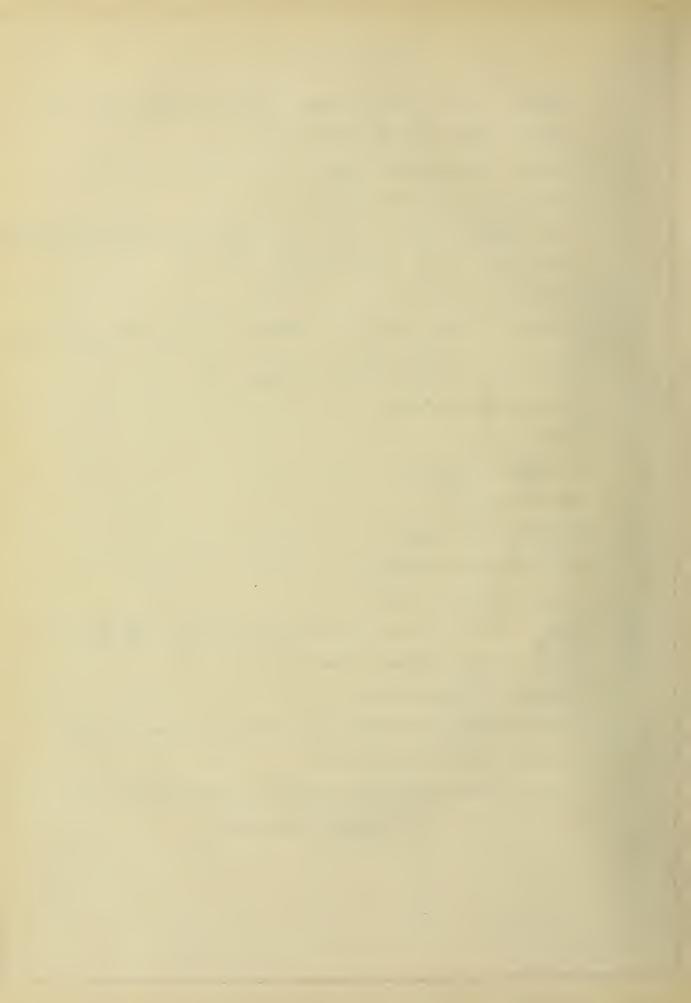
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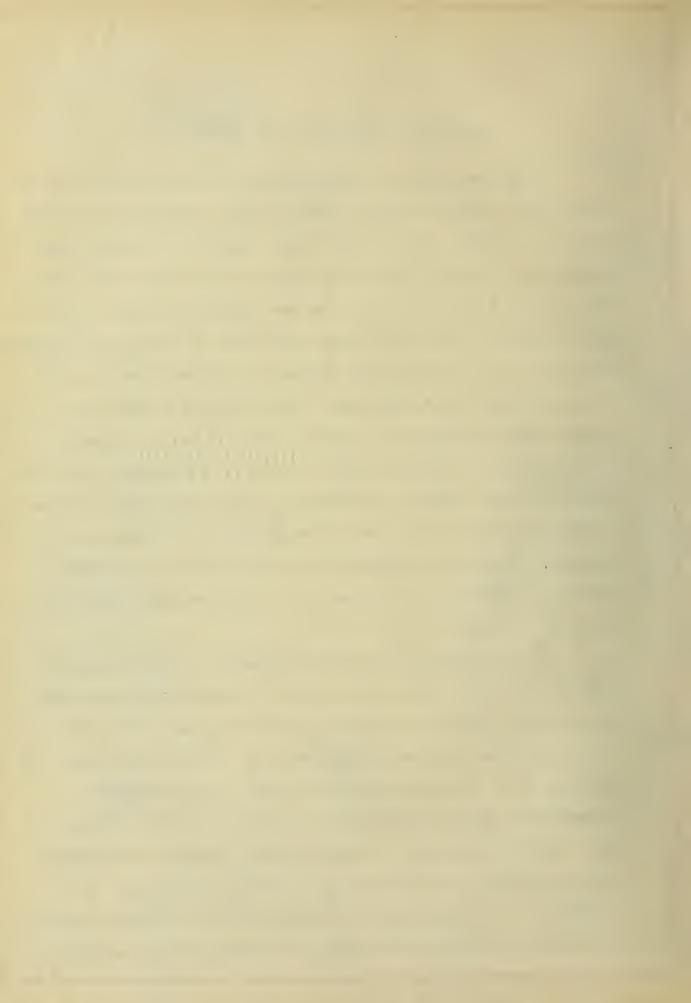
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GOLDSMITH'S INFLUENCE ON GOETHE.

There is a tide in the affairs of literature as well as in the more general affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fame, if not to fortune. Such a tide it was that starting in England, about the middle of the eighteenth century, swept across the North Sea and lapped the shore of Germany. Upon its waves were borne the works of such men as Sterne, Richardson, and De Foe, and, far more important than any of these, Goldsmith and Shakspere. The influence of these men upon German writers, especially those of the "Sturm und Drang" period cannot be overestimated. In 1768, Gerstenberg, the fore-runner of the "Sturmer und Dranger", published Ugolino, which Jacobs says would have been impossible without Shakspere. We might add that it would also have been impossible without Ossian, or Beaumont and Fletcher, for Gerstenberg's debt to them all is great.

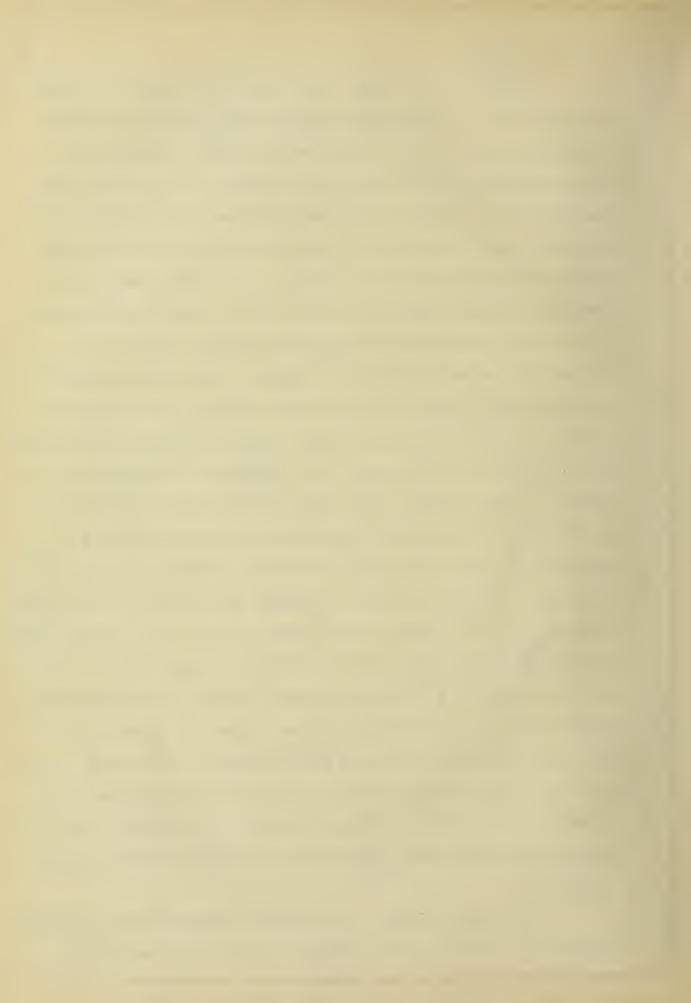
It was Herder who introduced Goethe to the two great Englishmen who for many years exerted a marked influence upon his writings. He never denied his indebtedness, but, on the contrary he was inclined to overrate it. To Eckermann, Dec. 16, 1828, he said: Ich bin Shakspere, Sterne, und Goldsmith undendliches schuldig geworden." A few years previously he said, also to Eckermann: "Unsere Romane, unsere Trauerspiele, woher haben wir sie denn als von Goldsmith, Fielding, und Shakspere?" Dec. 25, 1829, he wrote to Zeller, "Was Goldsmith und Sterne, grade im Hauptpunkte der Entwickelung, auf mich



gewirkt haben."

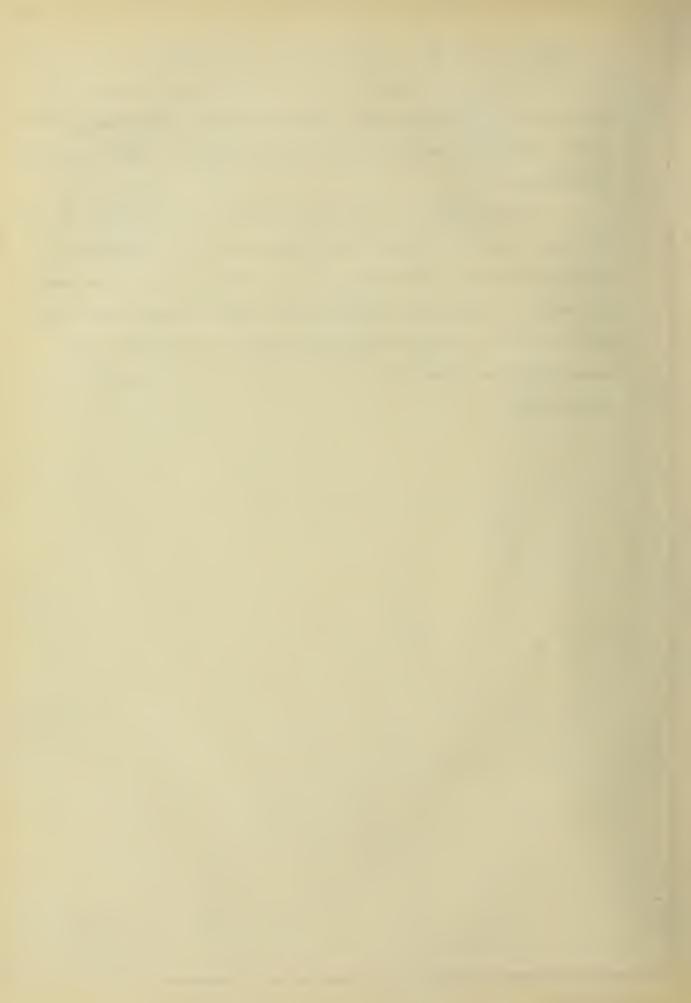
Indeed it would have been useless for Goethe to deny the influence of Goldsmith in face of the internal evidence establishing it. Just how far-reaching that influence was, it is the purpose of this paper to determine. So far as I have been able to ascertain, only two articles touching upon this subject, have been written. The first called "Goldsmith and Goethe" was written by Siegmund Levy, and published in the Goethe Jahrbuch, Band VI, in 1885. It is a very comprehensive but a very superficial article, and valuable rather as a guide than as an authority. He seems to have begun writing with the idea that a great influence was exerted, and wherever he finds in Goethe a word or an idea remotely resembling anything in Goldsmith, he attributes it to Goldsmith's influence. For example, from the fact that both authors speak of emigration to America, he concludes that Goethe, in this respect was influenced by the older author, whereas it is a well-known fact that at that time, as to-day, America was the Eldorado of European dreams, and the unnatural thing would be for Goethe to have omitted mention of it. This is only one of many instances in which he asserts a direct influence, without producing sufficient evidence to substantiate his claims. He seems to have followed no outline, to have had no method, but to have proceeded in a very hap-hazard manner and to have jotted down his supposed facts, with no regard whatever to coherence. The fire under his crucible was burning low, and the melting is very imperfect.

The second article is a Doctor's Dissertation, by Hertha Sollas, published in Heidelberg, in 1903. It is entitled



"Goldsmiths Einflusz in Deutschland im 18 Jahrhundert," so it does not deal exclusively with the topic to be discussed in this paper. Sollas has done little more than condense Levy's work, chiefly by omission, and has really added nothing to the discussion.

I have endeavored in this paper to deal with the subject in a more thoro and scientific manner, and to establish by internal evidence what things in the work of the two authors are merely resemblances, and in what cases Goethe shows that he was actively and strongly influenced by Goldsmith. How successful the attempt has been, is left to the reader to determine.

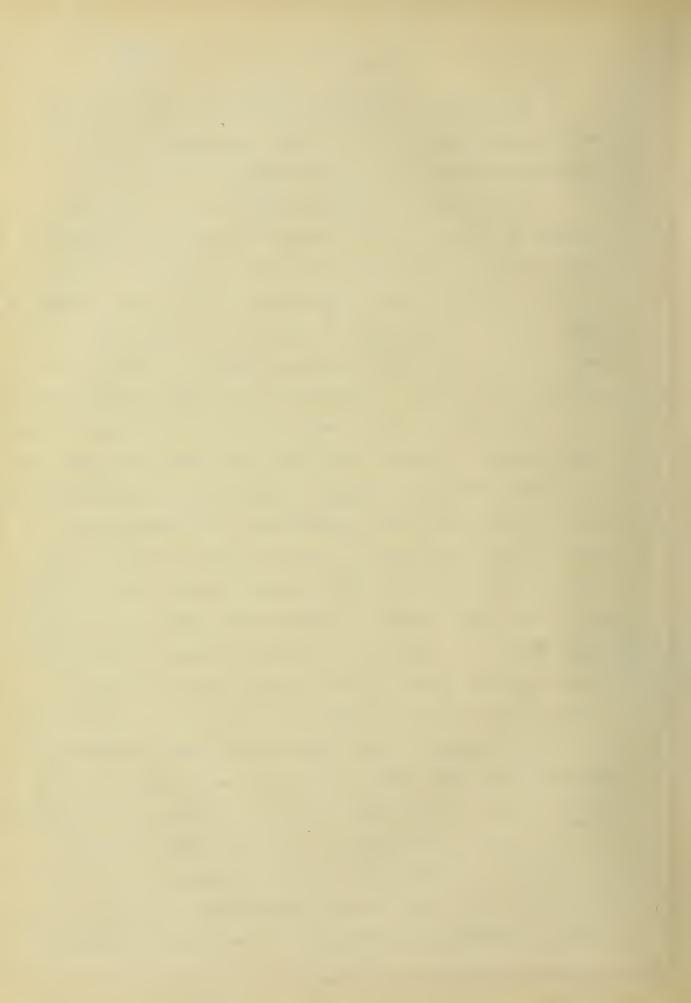


Goldsmith's Life.

So closely is Goldsmith's poetry and prose interwoven with the incidents of his life that a knowledge of his life is absolutely essential to an understanding of his work.

On the 10th of November, 1728, in the little Irish village of Pallas, the boy Oliver Goldsmith first opened his eyes to the world. His view was limited by a very narrow horizon. His father was the village parson, with a small salary, a large family, and no knack of getting on in the world, tho he had a very decided knack of making friends. "A man he was, to all the country dear, And passing rich on forty pounds a year."

When Oliver was two years old the family moved to Lissoy, "The loveliest village of the plain," and here a few years later, he came under the tutelage of Paddy Byrne, the schoolmaster. He was an able and witty Irishman, with an unfailing fund of story and song, and proved a great inspiration to the poetic genius of Goldsmith. In 1745 Goldsmith entered Trinity College as a sizar. His life here is graphically summed up by Gosse in these words: "He entered as a sizar and enjoyed a wretchedly undistinguished career. He was rejected for holy orders, he proposed to run away to America, he tried the law, and at last in 1753, he managed to enter the Medical School in Edinburg. Goldsmith was idle, unattractive, and unpromising as a youth, and at six and twenty seemed as fine an example of the hopeless ne'er do-well as anyone might wish to see." He remained a few months in Edinburg, then removed to Leyden to continue his studies, but soon becoming dissatisfied, he started on a walking tour thru the continent. For two years he travelled

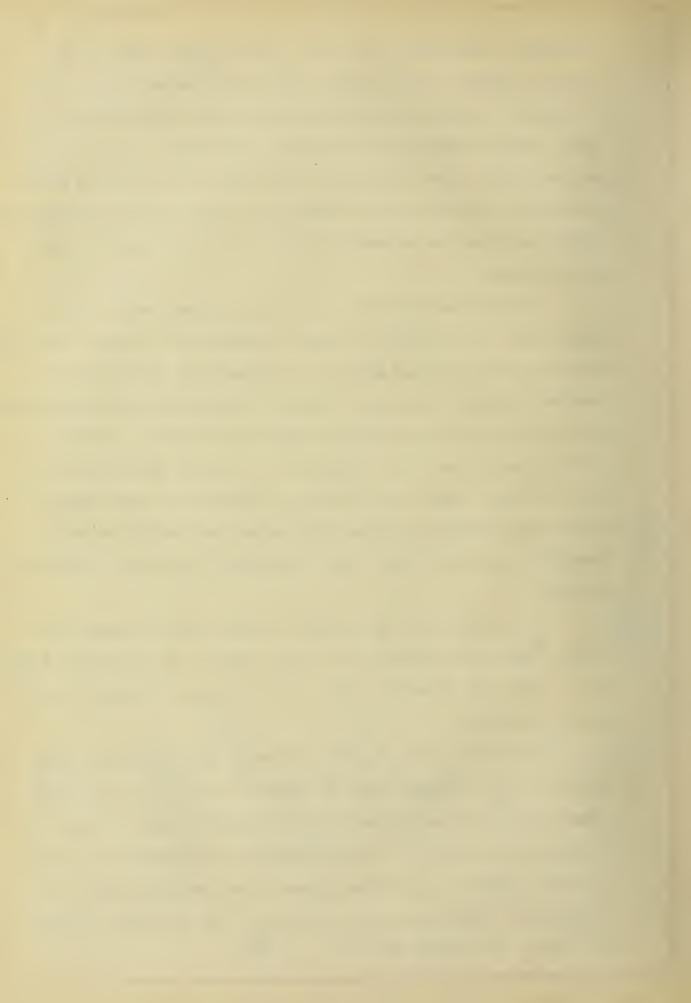


in France, Switzerland and Italy, and sometime during this period, received his doctor's degree from Lourain. He supported himself very precariously with his flute, and finally, in 1756, reached London in a penniless condition. A year later he met Griffiths, the bookseller, and took up the pen as a means of earning a livelihood. He worked at compilations, and similar tasks receiving in payment his board and lodging and a small sum of money.

In 1759 he published his first original work, "An Inquiry into the condition of Polite Learning in Europe." This was well received and brot him the opportunity to contribute to several magazines, in one of which he shortly afterward published his "Citizen of the World." This consists of a series of letters purporting to be written by a Chinese gentleman residing in London. They are written in Goldsmith's usual charming style, and exhibit his kindly the sometimes rather caustic humor in a clearer light than does almost any other of his productions.

About this time he became intimate with Johnson, Reynolds, Burke, and Garrick, and with them and a few others founded in 1763 "The Literary Club," one of the most famous of its kind in history.

It is said that in 1764 Goldsmith was arrested by his landlady for debt, and sent for Johnson to come to his relief. The latter took one of Goldsmith's completed manuscripts to a bookseller and sold it for 60 pounds. This manuscript, which was not published until two years later, was The Vicar of Wakefield. Previous to its publication, he had brot forward (1) Gosse, History of Eng. Lit., P. 345.



The Traveller in 1764, a protest against the extreme artificiality of the time.

The Vicar was an immediate success, and six editions were published during the author's life. It was almost at once introduced into France, and into Germany where it exerted a very narked influence upon the men of the Storm and Stress period.

Several other poems and plays appeared in rapid succession, the most important being The Deserted Village in 1770, and She Stoops to Conquer, three years later. Both of these still stand high in public favor. These were followed by several prose works, that were valuable only for their style, and are now seldom read or even mentioned. He also produced a host of compilations and short articles that have been completely lost.

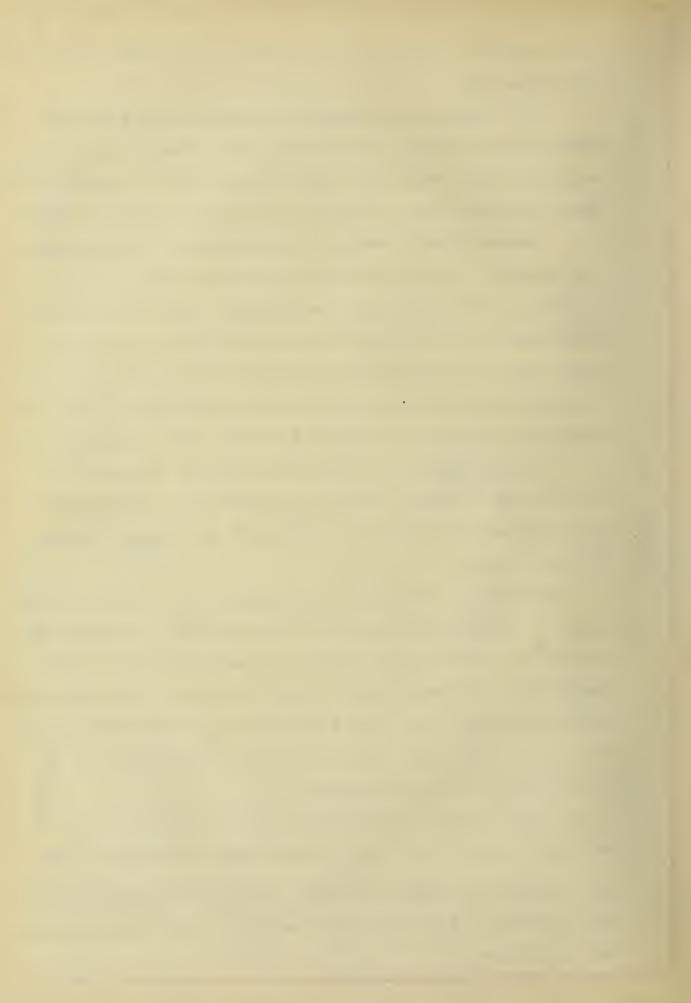
Little Goldy, as he was affectionately called by his friends, was a typical Irishman, impulsive and improvident, and generous to a fault, too generous to be just, as someone has said of him.

To one had a more charming literary style than he, tho at times his carelessness verged on slovenliness. In company he was shy and awkward, and sometimes actually appeared stupid.

Garrick said "He wrote like an angel and talked like poor Poll."

Yet occasionally there came a flash that put his tormentors to rout, as for instance, when he told Dr. Johnson that all his little fishes talked like whales."

He wrote upon diverse subjects, and upon all with the same easy and flowing grace. Johnson said: "There was no kind of writing that he did not touch, none that he touched that he did not adorn." His field was a small one, but well-eultivated and productive.



One of the best things that he did is an unfinished poem called Retaliation, found on his desk after his death. The penpictures of his companions in The Club are inimitable, those of Burke and Garrick being especially good. Of the former he says:

"For a patriot too cool: for a drudge, disobedient:
And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient.
Tho equal in all things, for all things unfit,
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit."

With Garrick he dealt unsparingly. He revealed his faults with a merciless wit, but at the end gave him due mead of praise "But peace to his spirit, wherever it flies,

To act as an angel and mix with the skies:

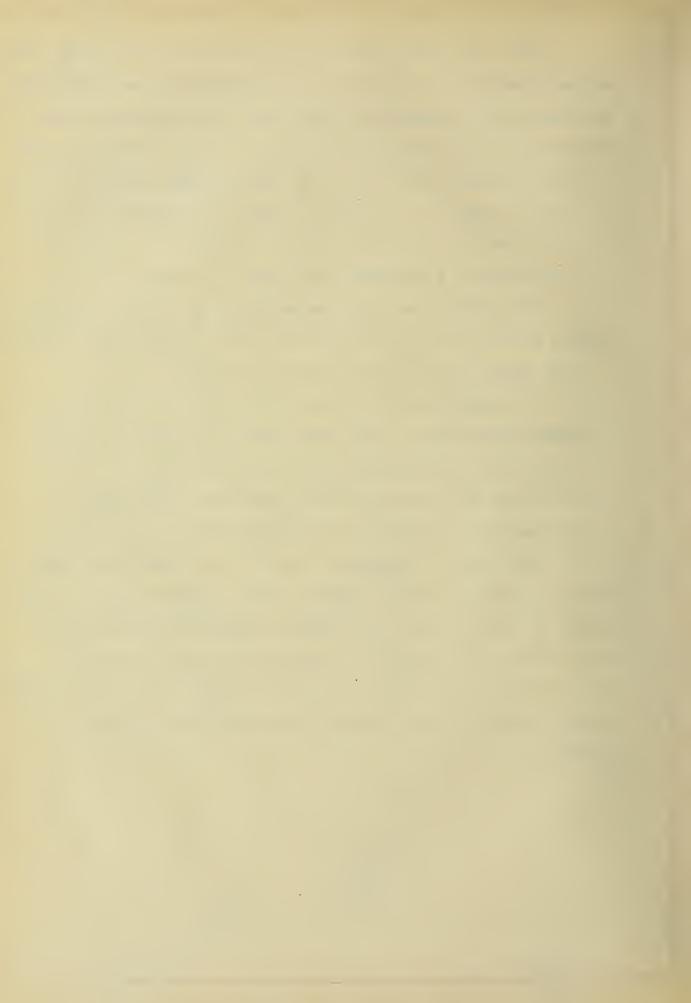
Shall still be his flatterers go where he will,

Those poets who one their best fame to his skill,

Old Shakspere receive him with praise and with love,

And Beaumonts and Bens be his Kellys above."

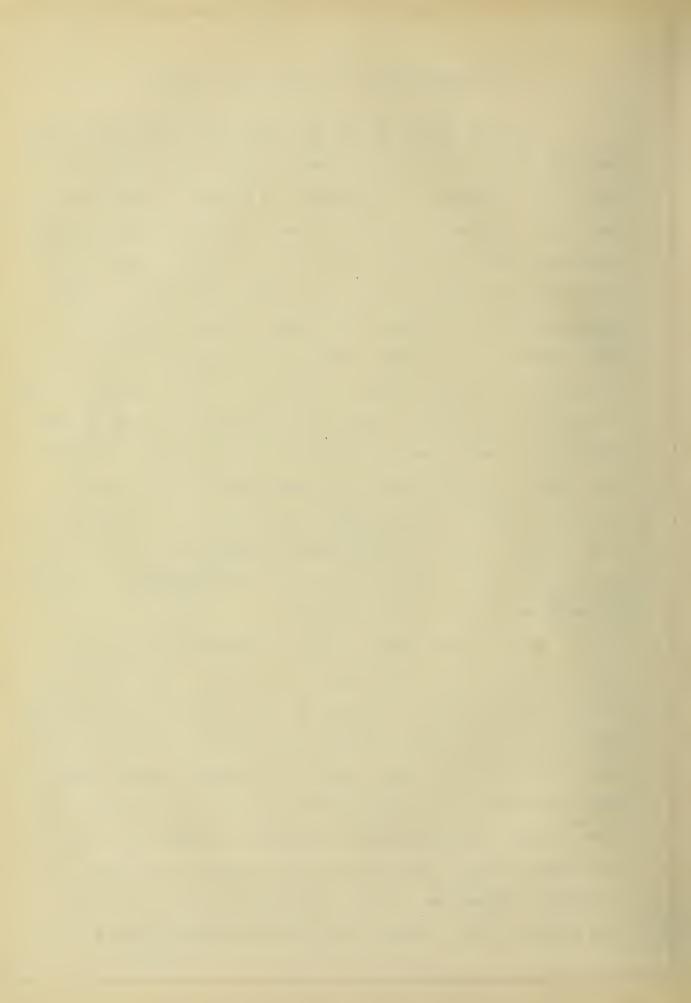
When news of Goldsmith's death came, Burke burst into tears, Reynolds left his workshop and Johnson was overcome with grief. He was buried in the Temple Churchyard and a monument was erected to his memory in Westminster. Many greater men are enrolled in the ranks of British authors but few who were better beloved. "A much greater man would have been less missed."



A COMPARISON OF GOLDSMITH AND GOETHE.

At first glance no two men seem more unlike than these two. The former was born and bred, and lived the greater part of his life in poverty, and sometimes in actual distress, and it was only a few years before his death that anything resembling affluence became his. The latter was brot up in a home of comfort and refinement, and spent his life environed by luxury. Goldsmith was improvident and always burdened with a load of debt. Goethe was a careful, well-to-do business man. Goldsmith was utterly lacking in taste in matters of dress, being as fond of colors as a peacock, and usually flaunting as many as that showy bird: Goethe was possessed of exquisite taste. Goldsmith, in ampearance, was awkward and unprepossessing "with not a feature to which a friend would desire to call attention," snub nose, thick lips and receding chin. Goethe was dignified, graceful and gracious, with fine form and classic features, - singularly handsome even as an octogenarian.

But, however many were the differences between them, the points of resemblance were far more numerous. They were much alike in the possession of what we call personality, something which we all understand but which is extremely difficult to define. Let us call it, that quality of a human being by means of which he attracts or repels other human beings. Both men were rich in that personality that attracts. Goldsmith, as has been previously stated, numbered among his friends the orator and statesman, Burke; the artist, Reynolds; the actor, Garrick; to say nothing of Dr. Johnson. Goethe's friendships played a very

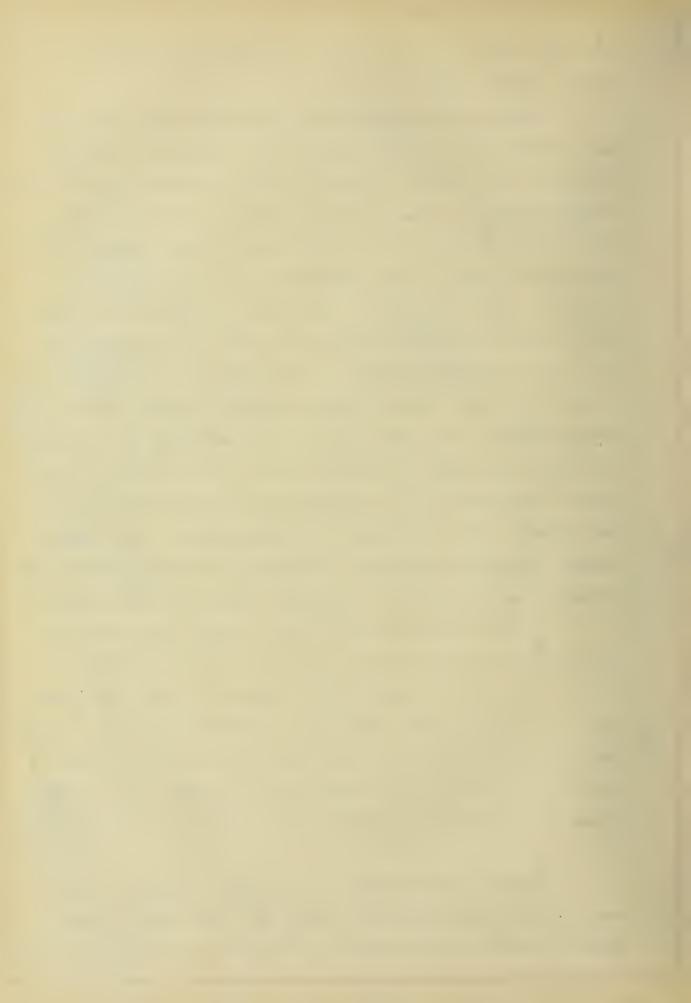


important role in his life work and included such men as Herder, Lavater, Merck and Schiller.

The introduction of their personality into their work made of them both what the Germans call "Gelegenheitsdichter." Goldsmith made literary material of his own experiences and those of his friends. Dr. Primrose is his father, the preacher in The Deserted Village is his brother Henry, Moses, George, "the gentleman in black." Young Honeywood and Tony Lumpkin are different sides of himself Goethe went to greater extremes in this direction than did Goldsmith. Lotte, in Werther, is Lotte Buff, Gretchen in Faust is Friederike Brion, and Iphigenia is Frau von Stein. His heroines are better than his heroes, perhaps because none can perfectly delineate his own character and Goethe was almost invariably his own hero. Werther, Wilhelm Meister and Tasso are all representations of differing parts of the author's nature, and Faust is Goethe himself, the complete Goethe. His male friends were sometimes allowed to pose for the villain, thus Mephisto is a composite picture of Merck and Lenz.

Not only characters but plots as well were taken from life. Goldsmith thru George's lips tells the story of his own walking tour, and the motif of She Stoops to Conquer is based upon one of his youthful adventures. So Goethe tells in Werther the story of his fancy for Lotte Buff, embodies in the fate of the hero, the story of the unfortunate Jerusalem, and in Tasso draws his plot from an incident that occurred in the court at Weimar.

Both men had breathed in the spirit of liberty which was stirring thruout the two Worlds, and they sent it forth again in words that live and burn. The Vicar exclaims: "I am for



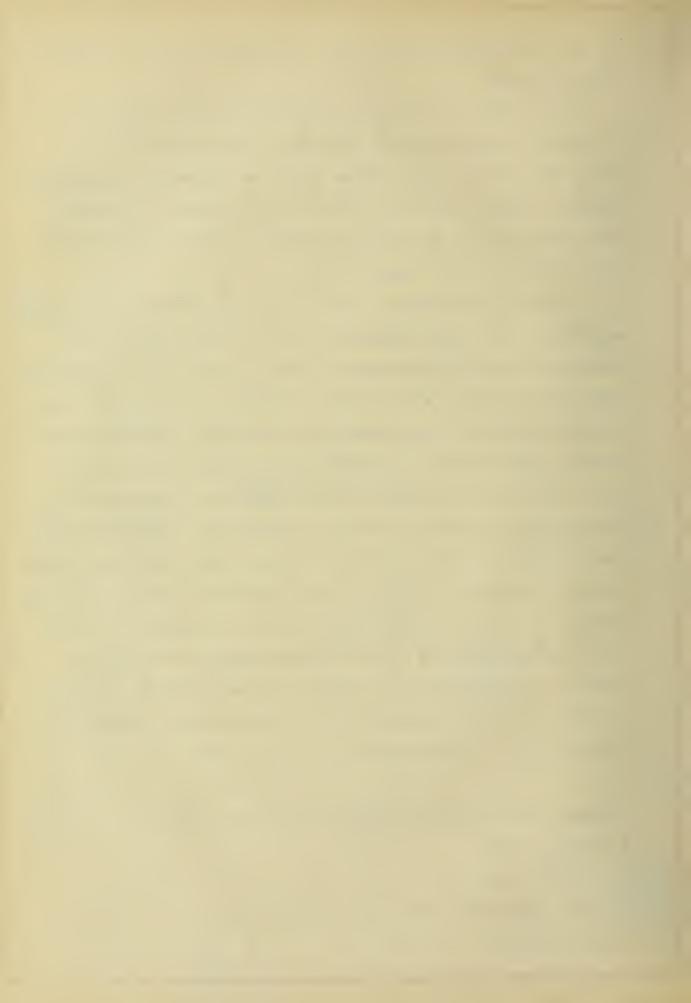
liberty, glorious liberty, that attribute of gods!" and The Traveller says:

Thine, Freedom, Thine the blessings pictured here,

Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear."²
So in Gotz, Georg, "der Helden Knabe" at the moment of greatest danger proposes the toast, "Es lebe die Freiheit," and all the company echo, "Es lebe die Freiheit," and "Freiheit" is the last word of the expiring Gotz.

But it is in Egmont that this feeling finds most perfect expression. The drama tells the story of the revolt of the Netherlands against the power of Spain. This spirit of rebellion finds vent not only thru Trange and Egmont, but also thru the lesser characters. Soest says, "Wir sind nicht gemacht wie die Spanier unser gewissen tyranisieren zu lassen. Und die Adel musz auch beizeiten suchen ihr die Flügel zu beschneiden," and later he proposes the toast, "Ordnung und Freiheit!" Egmont in his interview with Alba boldly contends for the freedom of the Netherlands. He says; "Die Niederländer fürchten ein doppeltes Joch, und wer bürgt ihnen für ihre Freiheit?" In his soliloquy in prison he cries: "Frisch hinaus da wo wir hingehören: Wo der Soldat sein angebornes Recht auf alle Welt mit raschen Shritt sich anmaszt und in fürchterlicher Freiheit,"

- 1 Works, Vol. I. Cunningham Ed. 1854, P. 380
- 2 " " " " " P. 17
- 3 Werke, Gotz, Weimar Ed. 1889, Vol. VIII, P. 114
- 4 Ibid, P. 169
- 5 Ibid P. 180
- 6 Werke, Weimar Ed. 1389, Vol. VIII, P. 183
- 7 Ibid P. 268.

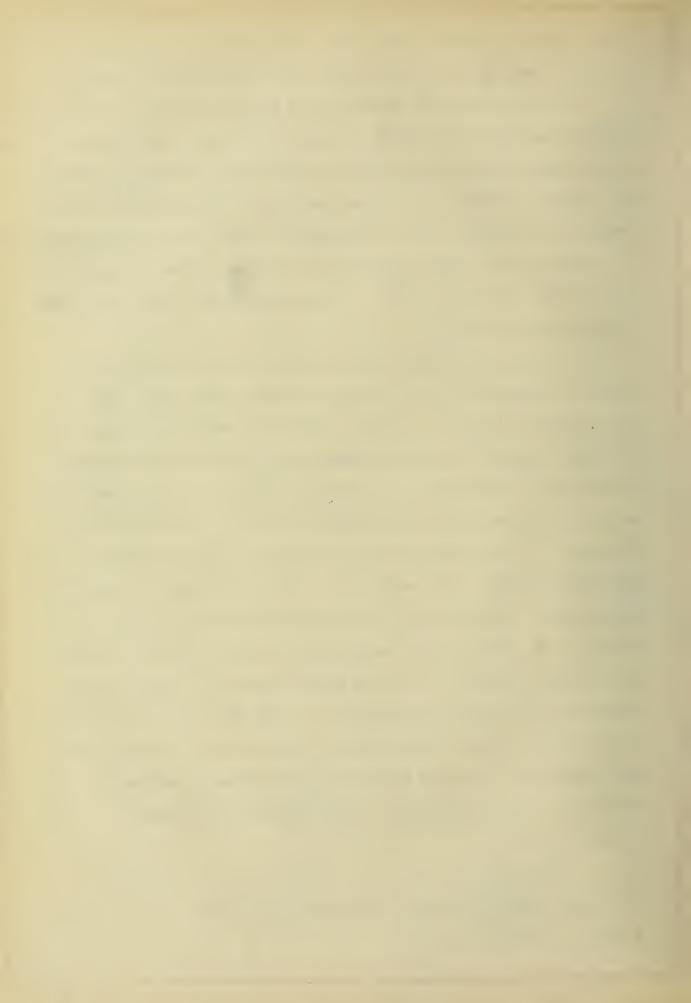


wie win Hegel wetter, durch Wiese Telt and Wald verderbend streicht, und keine Grenzen kennt, die Menschenhand gezogen."1

So just before his execution he sleeps and sees a vision of Liberty bearing in one hand a bundle of arrows, and in the other a laurel crown which she places upon his head. He wakens suddenly and reaches for the crown, then exclaims: "Verschwunden ist der Kranz! Du schönes Bild! Das Licht des Tages hat dich verscheuchet ----Ich schreite einen ehrenvollen Tode aus Kerker entgegen: Ich sterbe für die Freiheit für die ich lebte, und focht, der mich jetzt leidend opfre."2

In seeming contradiction to this love of freedom is the spirit of loyalty to the reigning monarch. The Vicar says: "I am then for, and would die for, monarchy, sacred monarchy, for if there be anything sacred among men it must be the anointed sovereign of his people, and every diminution of his power, in war or in peace, is an infringement upon the liberties of his subjects."3 His parting words to George, who has enlisted for the American War are: "And now my boy, thou art going to fight for thy country, remember how thy brave grandfather fought for his sacred king, when loyalty among Pritons was a virtue. Go my boy and imitate him in all but his misfortunes, if it was a misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. Go my boy, and if you fall, the distant, exposed, and unwept by those that love you, the most precious tears are those with which heaven bedews the unburied head of a soldier." This feeling also finds

- 1 Ibid, P. 281
- 2 P. 304-5
- 3 Murray's Brit. Classics, Works Vol. L, P. 383.
- 4 Ibid, P. 401

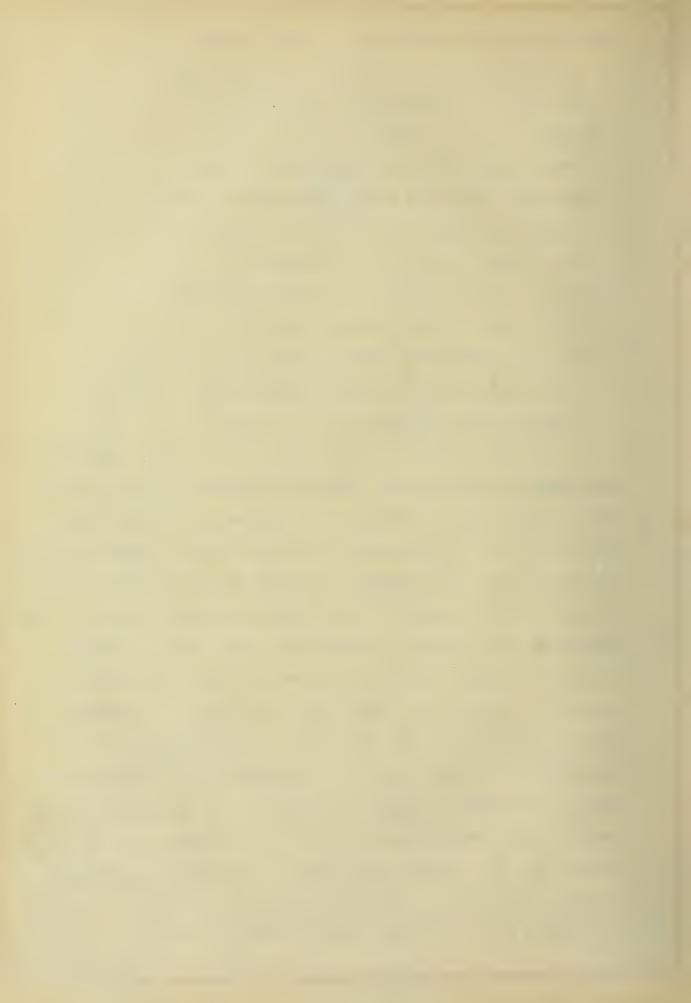


expression in The Traveller, in the following lines:

O, then how blind to all that truth requires
Who think it freedom when a part aspires.
Calm is my soul nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warns:
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne
Contracting regal power to stretch their own,
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free,
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start
Tear off reserve and bare my swelling heart,
Till, half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne."

So Götz, trying to recall Weislingen to his former allegiance exclaims impetuously: "Bist du nichteben so frei, so edel geboren als einer in Deutschland, unabhängig, nur dem Kaiser Unterthan, und du schmiegst dich unter Vasallen Verkennst den Wert eines freien Tittermanns, der nur abhängt von Gott, seinem Kaiser und sich selbst." Of the Kaiser he says: "Er meint's gut, und macht gern bessern. Da kommt denn Alle Tage ein Pfannenflicker und meint so und so. Und weil der Herr geschwind etwas begreift, und nur reden darf, um tausend Hände in Bewegung zu setzen, denkt er, es wär' auch alles so geschwind und leicht ausgeführt." Weiter sagte er: "Weislingen, ich bin euch ein Dorn in den Augen, so klein ich bin, und der Sickingen und Selbitz nicht weniger weil wir fest entschlossen sind zu sterben eh, als jemanden die Luft zu verdanken auszer Gott, und 2 Werke, Vol. VIII, P. 30-31

1 Murray's Brit. Classics, Works, Vol. I, P. 67-68



unsere Treu und Dienst zu leisten als dem Kaiser." Imprisoned in his castle, surrounded by the Kaiser's troops, himself outlawed, he proposes the toast: "Es lebe der Kaiser! Das soll unser vorletztes Wort sein wenn wir sterben!"

Egmont's loyalty becomes a blind allegiance that eventually brings him to the scaffold. He asks Orange: "Und hat der König treure Diener als uns? Wir sind ihm unterthan, und gewärtig in dem was ihm zukommt."²

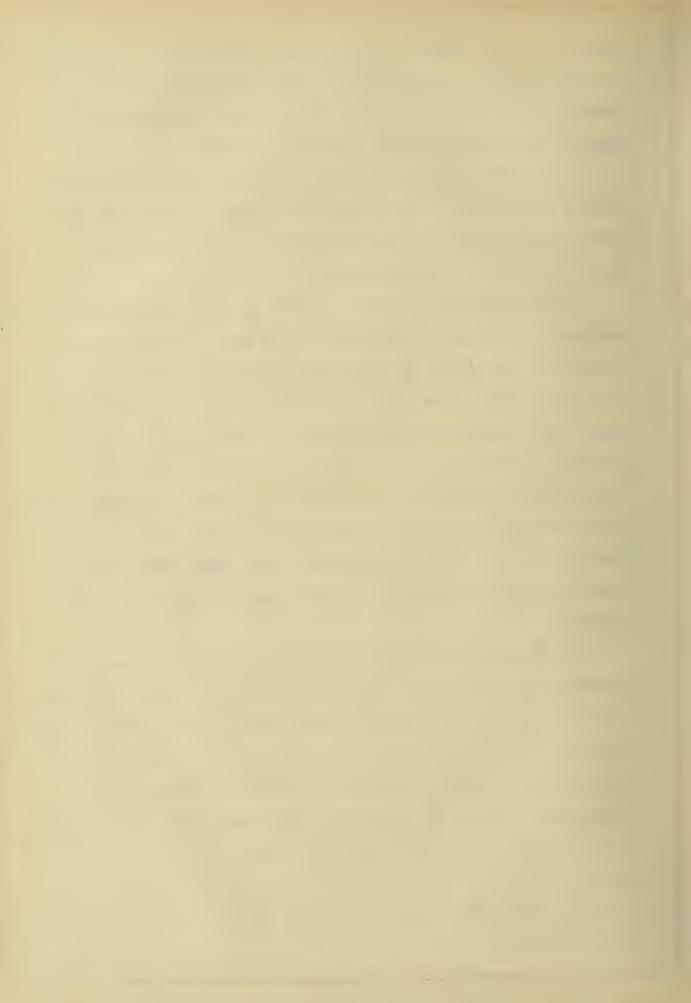
He defies the soldiers of Alba who have come to arrest him but when Alba demands his sword in the name of the king, he exclaims: "Der König! So nimm ihn! Er hat weit öfter des Königs Sache verteidigt, als diese Brust beschützt." Altho, at this time, quite overpowered by the thot of the king's treachery, in prison he regains his old confidence and he implores Ferdinand to help him to escape, saying: "Gewisz der König dankt dir dereinst meine Rettung. Jetzt ist er überrascht, und vielleicht ist ihm alles unbekannt. Dein Vater wagt, und die Majestät musz das geschene billigen, wenn sie sich auch davon entsetzet."

ernment. The Vicar says: "It were highly to be wished that legislative power would direct the law rather to reformation than severity. That it would seem convinced that the work of eradicating crimes, is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. It were to be wished then, that power, instead of 1 Werke, weimar Ed. 1889 Vol. VIII P. 112

² Ibid P. 48

Verke, Weimar Ed. 1889 Vol. VIII P. 273

⁴ Ibid P. 298

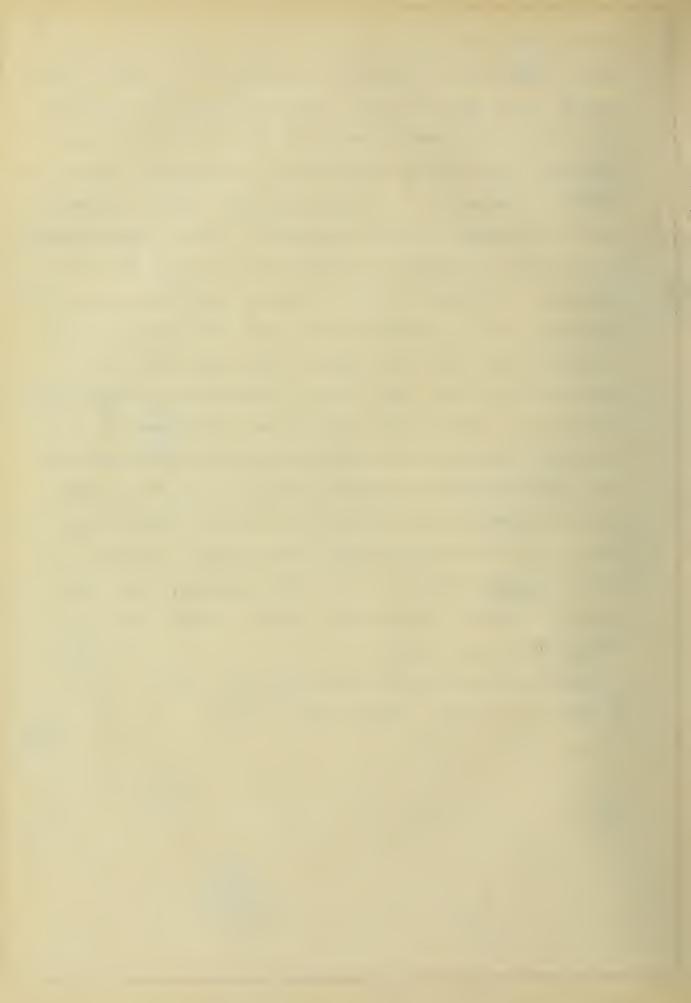


drawing hard the cords of society, till a convulsion come to burst them, instead of cutting away wretches as useless before we have tried their utility, instead of converting correction into vengeance. It were to be wished that we tried the restrictive arts of government, and made law the protector, but not the tyrant of the people." Compare with this Laertes' address to his fellow actors, on the same subject: "Uberall weiszt man nur zu verbieten, zu hindern, und abzulehnen, selten, aber, zu gebieten, zu befordern und zu belohnen. Man läszt alles in der Welt gehen, bis er schadlich wird, dann zurnt man, und schlagt d'rein!" Very similar are Egmont's views expressed in his interview with Alba: "Und ist ein Verbrechen des Unsinns, der Trunkenheit nicht eher zu entschuldigen als grausam zu bestrafen? Besonders wo so sichere Hoffnung wo Gewiszheit ist dasz die Ubel nicht wiederkehren werden? Waren Könige nicht darum sicherer? Werden sie nicht von Welt und Nachwelt geprieszen, die eine Beleidigung ihrer Wurde vergeben, bedauern, verachten konnten? Werden sie nicht eben deswegen, Gott gleich gehalten, der viel zu gross ist, als dasz an ihn jede Lasterung reichen sollte?

¹ Murray's Brit. Classics. Works, Vol. I, P. 430

² Werke, Vol. Weiman Erster Theil, P. 149

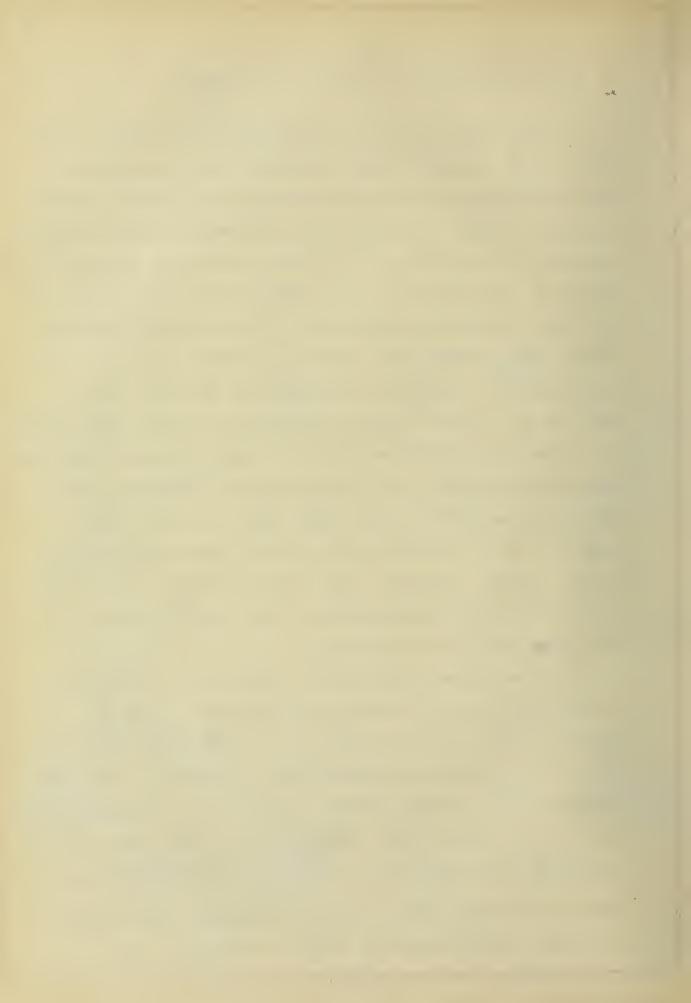
³ Werke Ibid, P. 264.



DIRECT INFLUENCE OF GOLDSMITH UPON GOETHE.

Only a year after the publication of the Vicar of Wakefield it was translated into German by Gelli 3. Herder, who was much interested in English authors, became familiar with it almost at once. How great was the impression made upon him is shown by a letter to his betrothed, written in November, 1770: "Haben Sie den Landpriester von Wakefield gelesen? Ich lese ihn jetzt wohl schon zum vierten Male. Er ist eins der schonsten Bucher, der in irgend einer Sprache existieren, und sehr, sehr gut übersetzt. So frug ja jenes ehrliche Mann alle Leute. Habt ihr den Propheten Baruch gelesen? und so mach ich beinahe mit meinem Landpreister von Wakefield. Er ist von der Seite der Laune, der Charaktere, des Lehrreichen und Ruhrenden, ein rechtes Buch der Menschheit." In the next letter he writes: Ale Roman hat er viel Fehleshaftes, als ein Buch menschlicher Gesichter, Laune, Charaktere, und was am Schönsten ist, menschlicher Herzen, und Herzensspruche will ich fur jede Seite so viel geben, als das Buch kostet."

It was probably this fourth reading which introduced Goethe to the Vicar, for according to Loeper it was in November, 1770 that Herder read the story to Goethe and Peglow. Herder is accredited with great skill as a reader, and to this fact may be due, in some degree, the effect of the book upon the mind of the younger author. His interest in The Vicar naturally led him to become acquainted with other works by the same author hence we find him familiar with The Traveller, The Deserted 1 Goethe's Works, Hempel Ed. Vol. 21, Anmerjungen, 377.



Village, The Good-hatured Man, and probably The Citizen of the World as well. All of these works, with the possible exception of the last named, exerted a marked influence, an influence not transitory, as were many others, but one that extended far thru his literary career.

Probably the most important effect was the introduction of the Idyllic element. With Goldsmith the idyllic is the dominant note. His two most important works, The Vicar and The Deserted Village, are purely idyllic in nature. These descriptions of simple, kindly people living out their joys and sorrows in the calm environment of rural life, came as a welcome relief from the formality and artificiality of French classicism. It is not surprising that the boy Goethe, already filled with ideas of revolt, should hail with joy this return to Nature, demanded by Rousseau and brot about in a literary sense by Goldsmith.

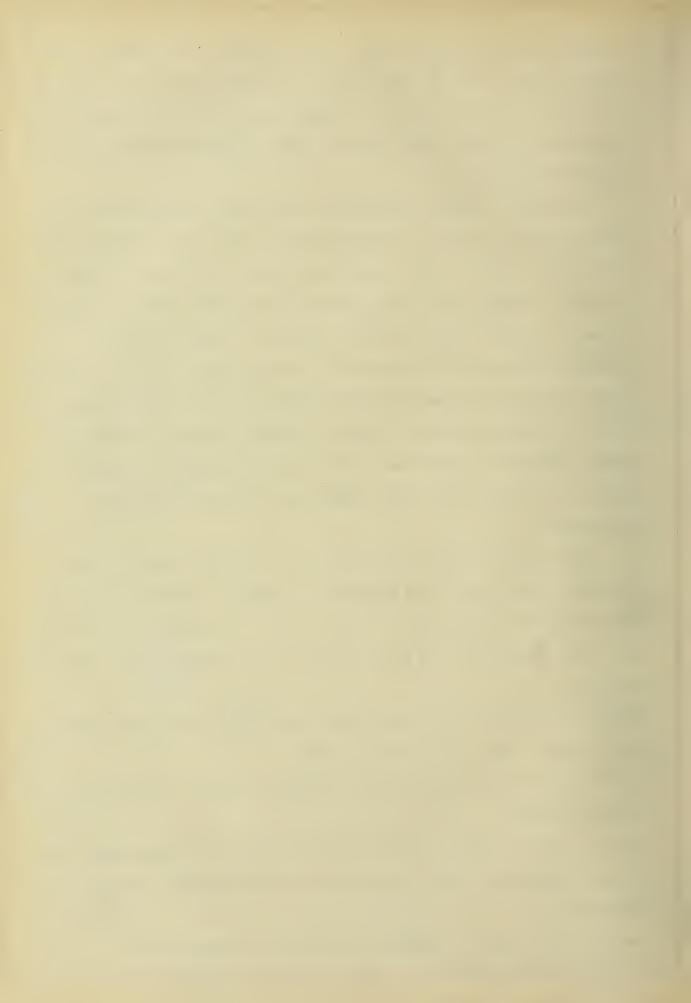
Götz von Berlichingen shows this idyllic element in the charming home life there depicted. A very delightful glimpse of this domestic atmosphere is seen in Act. I, scene 3. The characters are Elizabeth, the wife of Götz, his sister Maria, and his son, Karl.

Karl:-Ich bitte dich, liebe Tante, erzähl mir das noch einmal vom frommen Kind, 's is gar zu schön.

Maria: -Erzähl du mir's, kleiner Schelm, da will ich hören ob du acht giebst.

Karl:- Wart' e bisz, ich will mich bedenken. Es war einmal--jeer war einmal ein Kind, und sein Mutter war krank, da ging das
Kind hin--

Maria: - Wicht doch! Da sagte die Mutter: Liebes Mind-Karl! - Ich bin krank .



Maria: - Und kann nicht ausgehen.

Karl:-Und gab ihm Geld und sagte:Geh hin and hol dir ein Früh-

stuck. Da kam ein armer Mann-

Laria: - Das Kind ging. Da begegnet ihm ein alter Mann, der war-

nun, Karl!

Karl: - Der war-alt-

Maria: - Freilich! Der kaum mehr gehen konnte, und sagte: Liebes

Kind:-

Karl: - Schenk mir was, ich hab kein Brot gessen gestern und heut.

Da gab ihm's Kind das Geld -

Maria: - Das für sein Frühstück sein sollte.

Karl:- Da sagte der alte Mann-

Maria: - Da nahm der alte Mann das Kind-

Karl: - Bei der Hand , und sagte - und ward ein schöner glänzender

Heiliger und sagte: - Liebes Kind-

Maria: - Fur deine Wohlthatigkeit belohnt dich die Matter Gottes

durch mich: Welchen Kranken du anruhrst-

Karl:- Mit der Hand-es war die rechte, glaub ich.

Maria: - Ja.

Karl: - Der wird gleich gesund.

Maria: -Da lief das Kind nach Haus und konnt' für Freuden nichts reden.

Karl:-Und fiel seiner Mutter um den Hals und weinte für Freuden.

Maria: -Da rief die Mutter: Wie ist mir? Und war-nun, Karl!

Karl:-Und war--und war--

Maria: - Du giebst schon nicht acht! - und war gesund. Und das Kind Furierte König und Kaiser und wurds so reich, dasz es ein

groszes Kloster bauete.

The result of Maria's teaching appears a little later in



the scene in the conversation of Karl with his father.

Karl:- Guten Morgen, Vater.

Gotz:- (kuszte ihn) Guten Morgen, Junge. Wie habt ihr die Zeit gelebt?

Karl:- Recht geschickt, Vater. Die Tante sagt, ich sei recht geschickt.

Götz:- So!

Karl: - Ich hab viel gelernt.

Gotz:- Ei!

Karl: - Soll ich dir vom frommen Kind erzählen?

Gotz: - Nach Tische.

Karl: - Ich weisz noch was.

Gotz:- Was wird das sein?

Karl:- Jaxthausen ist ein Dorf und Schlosz an der Jaxt, gehört seit zweihundert Jahren den Herrn von Berlichingen erb--und eigentümlich zu.

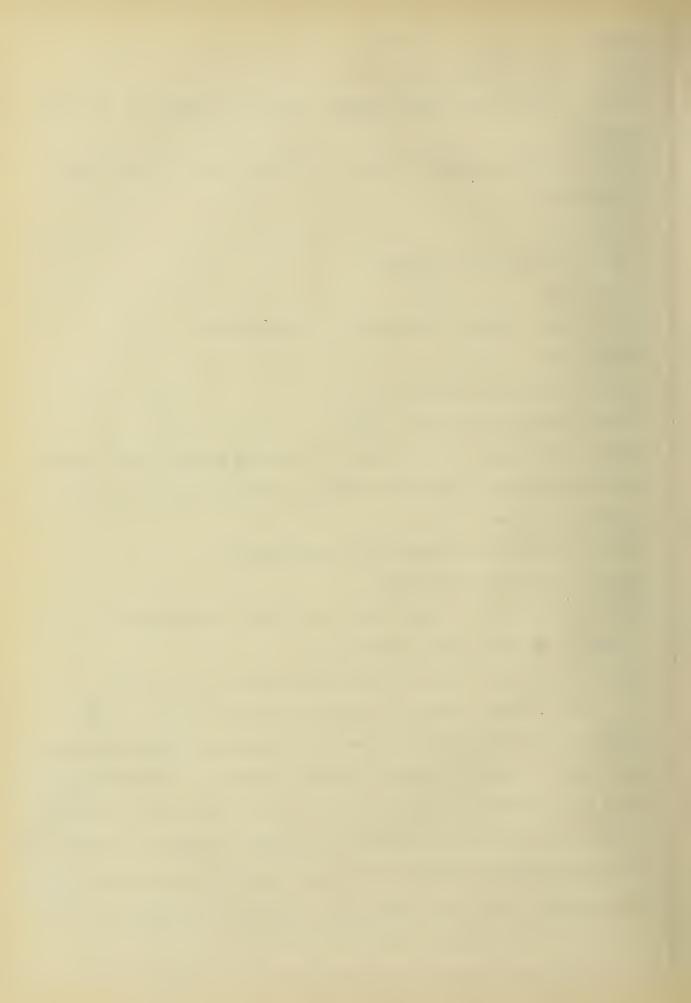
Götz:- Kennst du den Herrn von Berlichingen?

Karl:- (sieht ihn starr an).

Gotz:- (vor sich) Er kennt wohl vor lauter Gelehrsamkeit seinen Vater nicht. Wem gehört Jaxthausen?

Karl: - Jaxthausen ist ein Dorf und Schlosz an der Jaxt.

The Klärchen scenes in Egmont are also idyllic in character, and Egmont himself reveals constantly the love of nature and simple life. He cries to himself, in prison: "Unleidlich ward mir's schon auf meinem gepolsterten Stuhle, wenn in stattlicher Versammlung, die Fürsten was leicht zu entscheiden war, mit wiederkehrenden Gesprächen überlegten, und zwischen düstern Wänden eines Saals die Palken der Decke mich erdrückten.



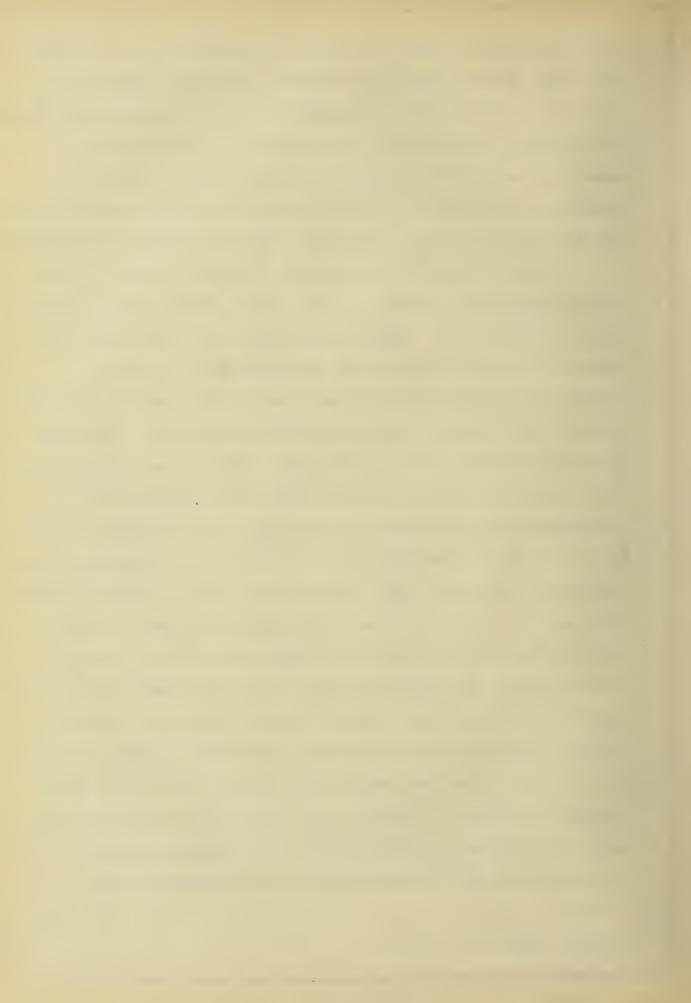
Da eilt ich fort so bald es möglich war, und rasch auf's Pferd, mit tiefem Atemzuge. Und frisch hinaus, da wo wir hingehören!

Ins Feld, wo aus der Erde dampfend jede nächste Wohlthat der Natur, und durch die Himmel wehend, alle Segen der Gesterne uns umwettern, wo wir dem erdgebornen Riesen gleich, von der Berührung unser Mutter, kräftiger uns in die Höhe reiszen, wo wir die Menschheit ganz und menschliche Begier in allen Adern fühlen."

Goethe himself in Dichtung und Wahrheit alludes to the idyllic element in Werther in these words, describing his friendship with Lotte Buff: "Muszig und traumerisch, weil ihm keine Gegenwart genügte, fand er das, was ihm abging in einer Freundin, die indem sie fürs ganze Jahr lebte, nur für den Augenblick zu leben schien. Sie mochte ihm gern zu ihrem Begleiter: er konnte beld ihre Nahe nicht missen, denn sie vermittelte ihm die Alltagswelt, und so waren sie bei einer ausgedehnten Wirthschaft auf dem Acker und den Wiesen, auf dem Krautland wie im Parten bald unzertrennliche Gefahrten. --- So lebten sie den herrlichen Sommer hin eine acht deutsche Idylle, wozu das furchtbare Land die Prosa und eine reine Neigung die Poesie hergab. Durch reife Kornfelder wandernd, erquickten sie sich am thaureichen Morgen: Das Lied der Lerche, der Schlag der Wachtel waren ergetzliche Tone, heisze Stunden folgten, ungeheure Gewitter brachen herein man schlosz sich nur desto mehr an einander, und mancher kleine Familien verdrusz war leicht ausgeloscht durch fortdauernde Liebe." Here is the origin of the Werther Idyl which forms the whole motif of the book. No more charming domestic scene can be found than the one in which Werther

¹ Ibid P. 281-2

² Werke Hempel Ed. P. 91

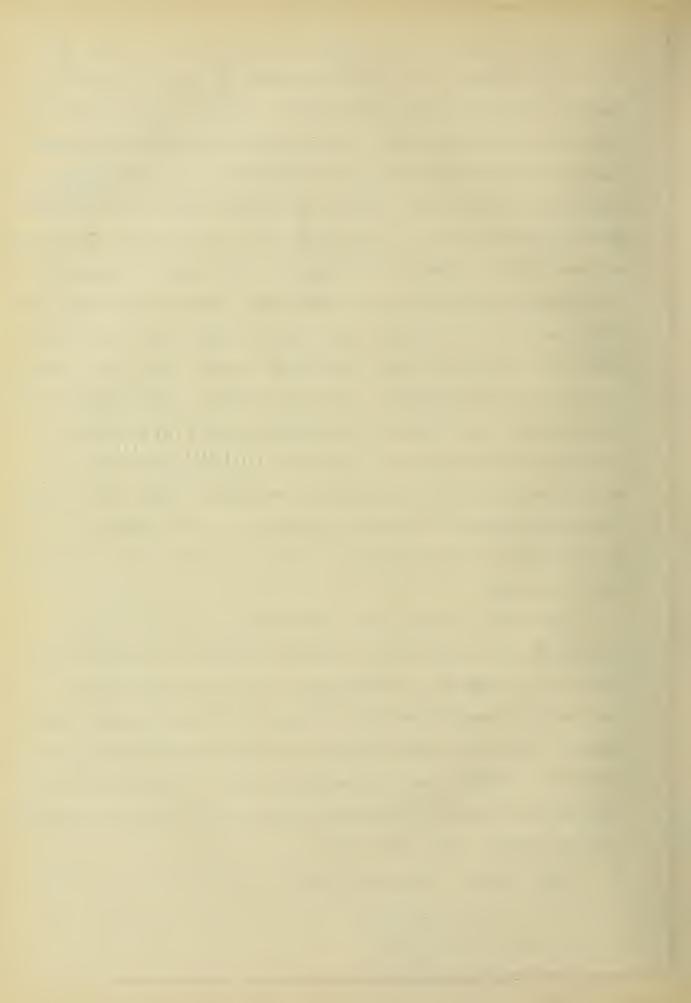


describes his meeting with Lotte. He leads up to it very skillfully by telling us, thru a third party, of Lotte's goodness and beauty, then comes the picture itself. "Ich ging durch den Hof nach dem wohlgebauten Hause, und da ich die vorliegende Treppe hinaufgestiegen war, und in die Thur trat, fiel mir das reizendste Schauspiel in die Augen, das ich je gesehen habe. In dem Vorsaale wimmelten sechs Kinder, von elf zu zwei Jahren um ein Mädchen von schoner Gestalt, mittlerer Grosze, die ein simples weiszes Kleid mit blaszroten Schleifen an Arm und Brust anhatte. Sie hielt ein schwarzes Brot und schnitt ihren Kleinen rings herum jedem sein Stück nach Proportion ihres Alters und Appetits ab, gab's jedem mit solcher Freundlichkeit, und jedes rufte so ungekunstelt sein: Danke! indem es mit den kleinen Handchen lange in die Höhe gereicht hatte, ehe es noch abgeschnitten war, und nun mit seinem Abendbrote vergnügt entweder wegsprang, oder nach seinem stilleren Charakter, gelassen davonging nach dem Hoftore zu, um die Fremde und die Kutsche zu sehen, darinnen ihre Lotte wegfahren sollte."

During the evening the conversation turns upon books and Lotte says: "Der Autor ist mir der Liebste, indem ich meine Welt wieder finde bei dem es zugeht wie um mich, und dessen Geschichte mir so interessant und herzlich wird, als mein eigen häuslich Leben, das freilich kein Paradies, aber doch um ganzen eine Quelle unsäglicher Gluckseligkeit ist." Then says Werther: "Ich bemühte mich meine Bewegungen über diese Worte zu verbergen.

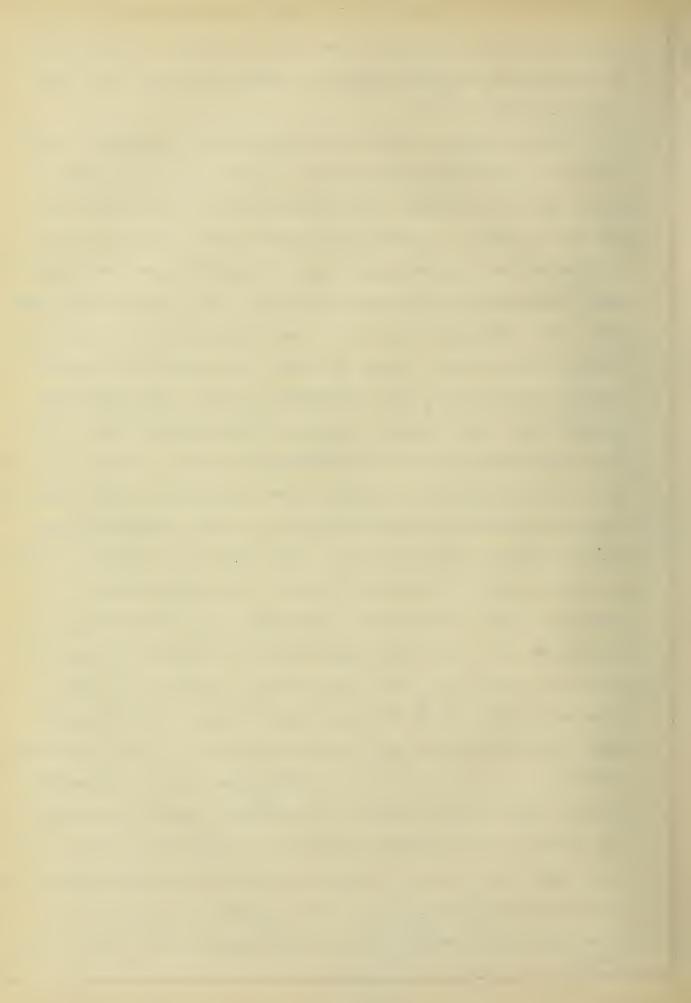
¹ Werke Weimar, Vol. XII, P. 26

² Werther, Weimar, Vol. 19, P. 29.



Das ging freilich nich weit, denn da ich sie mit solcher Wahrheit im Vorbeigehen vom Landpriester von Wakefield reden hörte, kam ich ganz auszer mich."

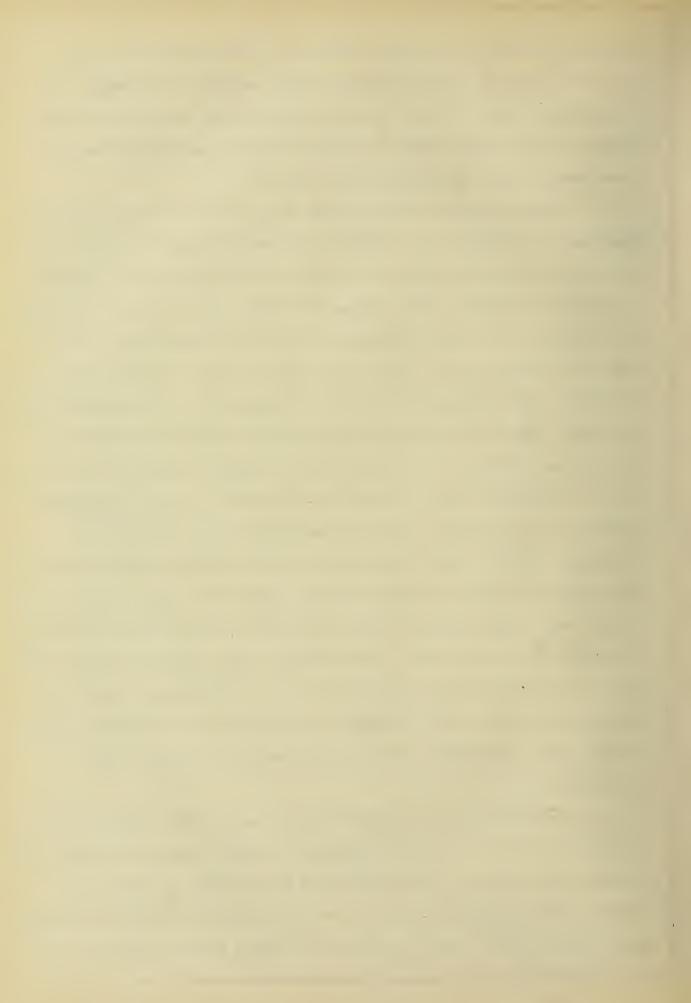
Another very delightful scene pictured in Werther, is the incident of the "Wirtins" children, narrated in the letters of May 26 and 27: "Ungefahr eine Stunde von der Stadt liegt ein Ort den sie Wahlheim nennen. Die Lage an einem Hugel ist sehr interessant und wenn man oben auf dem Fuszpfade zum Dorf herausgeht, ubersieht man auf einmal das ganze Thal, und was über alles geht, sind zwei Linden, die mit ihren ausgebreiteten Aesten den kleinen Platz vor der Kirche bedecken, der ringsum mit Bauernhausern, Scheuern und Höfen eingeschlossen ist. Das erste Mal als ich durch einen Zufall, an einem schönen Nachmittage, unter die Linden kam, fand ich das Plätzchen so einsam. Es war alles im Felde: nur ein Knabe von ungefähr vier Jahren sasz an der Erde und hielt ein anderes etwa halb-jähriges, vor ihm, Zwischen seinen Fuszen sitzendes Kind mit beiden Armen wider seine Brust, so dasz er ihm zu einer Art von Seszel diente, und ungeachtet der Munterkeit womit er aus seinen schwarzen Augen herumschaute, ganz ruhig sasz. ---- Da kommt gegen Abend eine junge Frau auf die Kinder los, die sich indes, nicht gerührt hatten, mit einem Morbchen am Arm, und ruft vom weitem: Philipps, du bist recht brav. Sie gruszte mich, ich dankte ihr, stand auf, trat näher hin und fragte sie ob sie Mutter von den Kindern ware? Sie bejahte es, und indem sie dem Altesten einen halben Weck gab, nahm sie das Kleine auf, und kuszte es mit aller mutterlichen Liebe. Ich habe--sagte sie--meinem Philipps das Kleine zu halten gegeben, und bin mit meinem Altesten in die Stadt gegangen um Weiszbrot zu holen und zucker und ein Erdenbreipfannchen. Der lose Vogel, der 1 Ibid.



Grosze, hat mir Gestern das Pfännchen zerbrochen als er sich mit Philippen um die Scharre des Breis zankte. Ich fragte nach dem Ältesten und sie hat mir kaum gesagt dasz er sich auf der Weise mit ein Paar Gänsen herumjage, als er gesprungen kam und dem zweiten eine Haselgerte mitbrachte!1

However opinions may differ as to the influence actually exerted by Goldsmith upon others of Goethe's productions there can be no question regarding Dichtung und Wahrheit, for here he openly and candidly adknowledges it. The connection of the Vicar of Wakefield with the Sesenheim Idyl is very well known, yet it may be worth while to recall it. Goethe tells us of his hearing the book read by Herder, and of the impression it made upon him. He then, rather abruptly tells us of his visit to Sesenheim in company with Weyland. He describes the simple country place, brings in his characters one by one and when he has them all assembled before us he exclaims: "Meine Verwanderung waren über allen Ausdruck, mich so ganz leibhaftig in der Wakefield' schen Familie zu finden. Der Vater konnte freilich nicht mit jenem trefflichen Manne verglichen werden: allein, wo gabe es auch seines-gleichen? Dagegen stellte sich alle Wurde welche jenem Ehegatten eigen ist, hier in der Gattin dar Man konnte sie nicht ansehen, ohne sie zugleich zu ehren und zu scheuen. Man bemerkte bei ihr die Folge einer guten Erziehung ihr Betragen war ruhig, heiter und einladend.

Hatte die altere Tochter nicht die gerühmte Schönheit
Oliviens, so war sie doch wohlgebaut, lebhaft und eher heftig: sie
zeigte sich überall thätig und ging der Mutter in allem an
Händen. Friedricken an die Stelle von Primrosens Sophie zu setzen
war nicht schwer: denn von jener ist wenig gesagt, man gibt nur
l werke, weimar Ed. Vol. XIX, P. 16



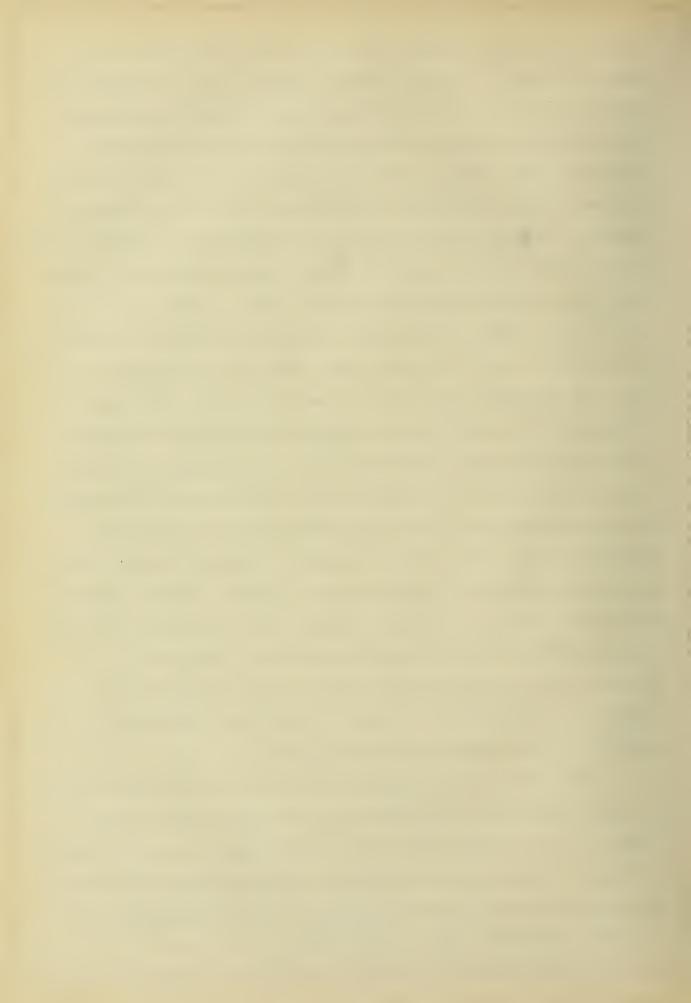
zu, dasz sie liebenswurdig sei; diese war es wirklich. Wie nun dasselbe Geschäft, desselbe Zustand überall, wo er vorkommen mag, "hnliche, wo nicht gleiche Wirkungen hervorbringt, so kam auch hier manches zur Sprache, es geschah gar manches was in der Wakefield' schen Familie sich auch schon ereignet hatte. Als nun aber gar zuletzt ein längst angekündigter und von dem Vater mit Ungeduld erwarteter jüngerer Sohn in's Zimmer sprang und sich dreist zu uns setzte, indem er von den Gästen wenig Notiz nahm, so enthielt ich mich kaum auszurufen: Moses, bist du auch da!

Goethe tells us that this resemblance was not a figment of his fancy but that it was also very evident to his companion, Weyland, who delighted in his astonishment. He says: "Als mein Gefährte mit mir in das für uns zubereitete Gastzimmer gelangte, brach er sogleich mit Selbstgefälligkeit in behaglichen Scherz aus, und that sich viel darauf zu Gute, mich mit der Ähnlichkeit der Primrosischen Familie so sehr überrascht zu haben. Ich stimmte mit ein, indem ich mich dankbar erwies. Fürwahr! rief er aus, das Märchen ist ganz beisammen. Dieses Familie vergleicht sich jener sehr gut, und der verkappte Herr da mag sich Jie Ehre anthun, für Herrn Burchell gelten zu wollen: weil wir in gemeinen Leben die Bösewichter nicht so nötig haben als in Romanen, so will ich für diesmal die Rolle des Neffen über nehmen, und mich besser aufführen als er."1

Like many another cherished illusion of our youth, this one has been punctured by the merciless pen of the investigator.

Loeper seems to have proved quite conclusively² that at the time of Goethe's first visit to Sesenheim he had not read The Vicar of Wakefield, and that the story as told in his Autobiography is 1 werke, Weimar Ed. Vol. XXVII, P.256

^{2 &}quot; Hempel Ed., Vol. XXII, P. 377-8



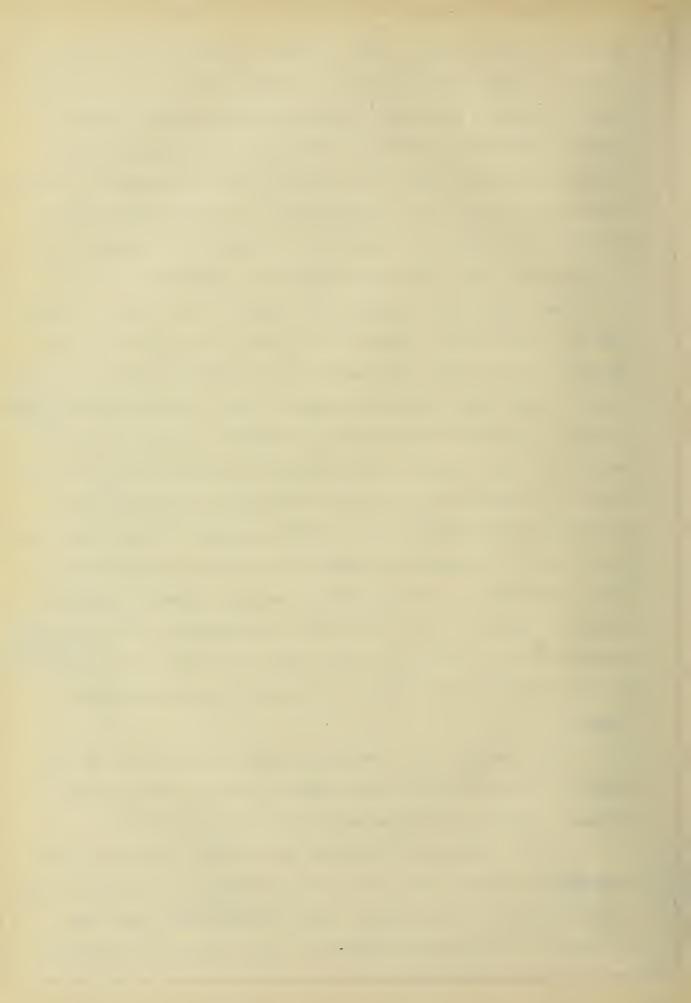
purely Dichtung. However that may be, the fact of the influence exerted, remains unquestionable. In fact, it is rather strengthened by Loeper's assertion. Had Goethe's story been Tahrheit instead of Dichtung we should have had merely an interesting literary incident, while if we accept Loeper's statement, we have remaining the fact that the influence of The Vicar was still strong enough after the lapse of forty years, to strongly color his memoirs of the interesting family at Sesenheim.

One other book, a product of Goethe's riper years, reveals plainly this idyllic element, for no more charming idyl than

Hermann und Dorothea is to be found in any language. The characters are all drawn from the middle walks of life, the well-to-do Burger class. There is "Der treffliche Hauswirt," prosperous and ambitious, like Deborah fond of worldly show and most anxious to add to his standing by forming a matrimonial alliance between his son and the daughter of a wealthy neighbor. Like Deborah also, he is fond of argument, and makes up in noise what he lacks in logic. There is also "die wurdige Hausfrau, capable and kindhearted, anxious not for the worldly advancement so much as the happiness of her son. She is the female prototype of Dr. Primrose, but more sophisticated, while her husband greatly resembles Deborah.

The preacher, "der treffliche Pfarrer und milde" is very evidently patterned after the country parson in The Deserted Village, and is a character worthy of Goldsmith himself.

Not far inferior, in his own way is "der Apotheker, der gesprächige Nachbar," who seems to be original with Goethe. These four characters, with Hermann, "der wohlgebildete Sohn", und "Dorothea, das treffliche Mädchen," and a few minor characters



make up the dramatis personae of this most lovely German idyl,
which would have been impossible without the inspiration of
Goldsmith.

Siegmund Levy says: "Mit dem Vicar of Wakefield und so viel ich absehe, keinen anderen englischen Roman des Jahrhunderts, theilt Goethes Wilhelm Meister die Lyrischen Einlagen, die der Stimmung der Situation aussprechend, ihr erhöhten Ausdruck geben sollen und auf irgend eine Weise in die Erzählung und Handlung verflochten werden." Let us compare a few of these lyrics in verification of this statement. Take, for example, the little song sung by Olivia after her desertion by Thornhill.

"When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?
The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover.
And wring his bosom is to die." 2

This is a perfect expression of her melancholy mood just as is the Harper's song in Wilhelm Meister.

"Wer nie sein Brod mit Thranen asz

Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte

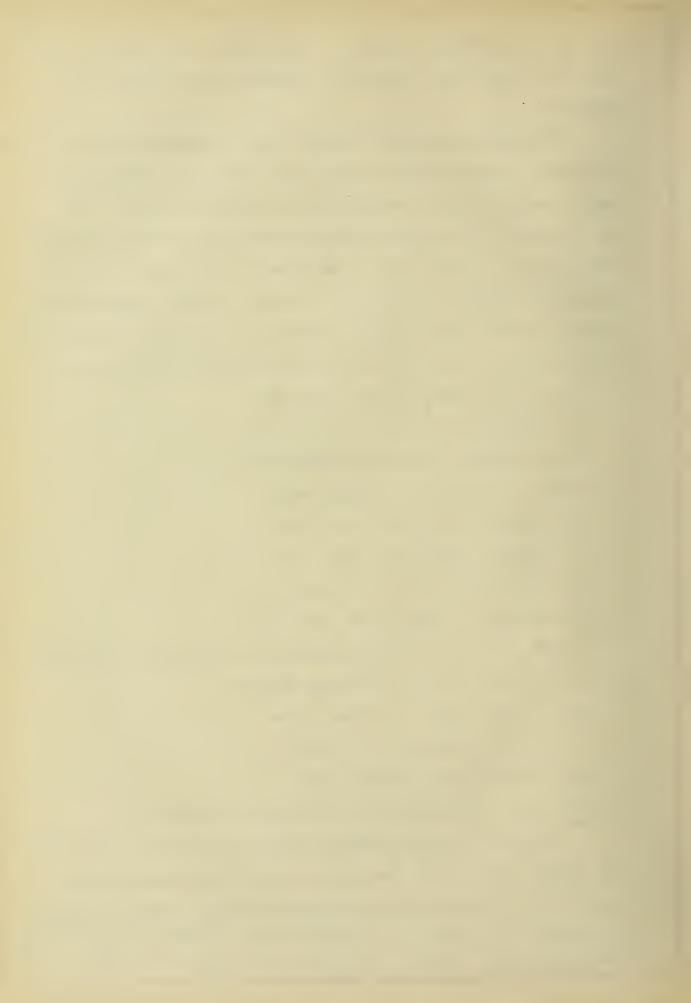
Auf seinem Bette weinend sasz,

Der kennt euch nicht, ihr himmlischen Mächte."

So Mignon's songs scattered thruout the book, are a perfect index to her mood. The little song at the beginning of
Book III is a most beautiful expression of her intense 'Heimweh."

1 Jahrbuch, VI, P. 284. 3 Wilhelm Meister Weimar Ed. Vol.21, P. 216

2 Murray's Brit. Classics, Works Vol.I, P. 415



"Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen bluhn,
Im dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühn,
Ein sanfter Wind vom blauen Himmel weht
Die Myrte still, und hoch die Lorbeer steht,
Kennst du es wohl? Dahin! Dahin!
Möcht ich mit dir Omein Geliebter ziehn."1

"Kennst du den Berg und seinen Wolkensteg"

Das Maulthier sucht im Nebel seinen Weg,

In Höhlen wohnt der Drachen alte Brut,

Es stürzt der Fels, und über ihn die Flut,

Kennst du ihn wohl? Dahin! Dahin!

Geht unser Weg. O Vater lasz uns ziehn."

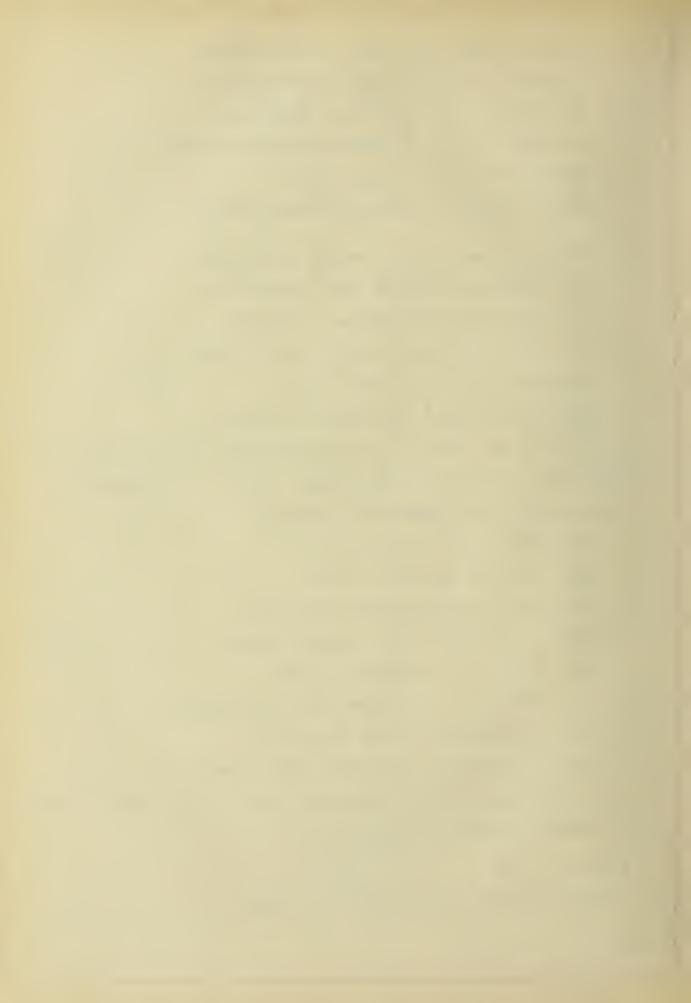
It is not only in The Vicar that the lyric appears. It is also found in She Stoops to Conquer. Here is Tony Lumpkin's drinking song, The Three Jolly Pigeons.

"Then come put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever,
Our hearts and our liquors are stout,
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons forever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons,
But of all the gay birds in the air,
Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons."

Expressive of this same convivial mood is Philine's song in Wilhelm Meister:

1 Ibid, P. 233

2 Brit. Classics, Works, Vol. I., P. 221



"Wenn die Nachtigall Verliebten

Liebevoll ein Liedchen singt,

Das Gefangnen und Betrubten

Mur wie Ach und Wehe klingt:

Mit wie leichtem Herzensiegen

Horchet ihr der Glocke nicht,

Die mit zwölf bedächtigen Schlägen

Ruh und Sicherheit verspricht."1

So in Egmont, Klärchen thinks of her soldier lover and as she works, sings:

"Die Trommel gerühret !

Das Pfeifchen gespielt

Mein Liebster gewaffnet

Dein Haufen befiehlt.

Die Lanze hoch führet

Die Leute regieret.

Wie klopft mir das Herze!

Wie wallt mir das Blut!

O hatt' ich ein Wamslein

Und Hosen und Hut,

Ich folgt' ihm zum Thor' naus

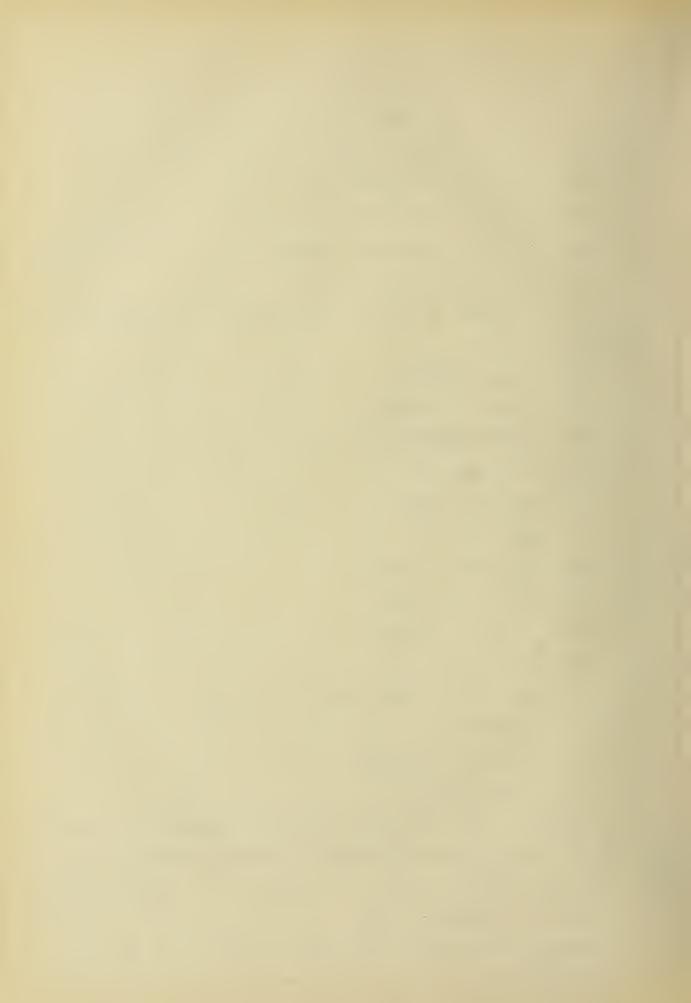
Mit mutigem Schritt,

Ging' durch die Provinzen

Ging' "berall mit."2

Disguise was a favorite device with Goldsmith, a device that was freely adopted by Goethe. In The Good-Natured Man,

- 1 Werke, Bohlan Ed. Vol. 22, P. 193.
- 2 Ibid, Vol. VIII, P. 193
- 3 Works of Goldsmith, Brit. Classics, Vol. I, P. 172.



the bailiff and his man who have come to arrest Young Honeywood, learning that Miss Richland is in the house, assume the role of navy officers.

So in The Vicar, Sir William Thornhill appears until the very end of the tale, as Mr. Burchell, a needy but kindly gentleman, whose poor memory makes it difficult at times for him to maintain his incognito.

When Moses goes to the fair to sell his horse, he is met by the disguised sharper, Jenkinson, and cheated out of his horse. A similar fate befalls Dr. Primrose himself when he goes on the same errand. The good Doctor is a second time imposed upon-by a butler and housekeeper masquerading as master and mistress. In the ballad Edwin and Angelina, or The Hermit, as it is sometimes called, both characters are disguised, she as a man, he as a holy hermit. Goethe used this poem as a basis for his opera, Erwin and Elmire, employing not merely the disguise motif, but almost the entire story. Sometimes he did little more than translate. Angelina, telling her story to the supposed hermit says:

For still I tried each fickle art,

Importunate and vain,

And while his passion toucht my heart,

I triumphed in his pain,

Till, quite dejected with my scorn

He left me to my pride.

And so't a solitude forlorn

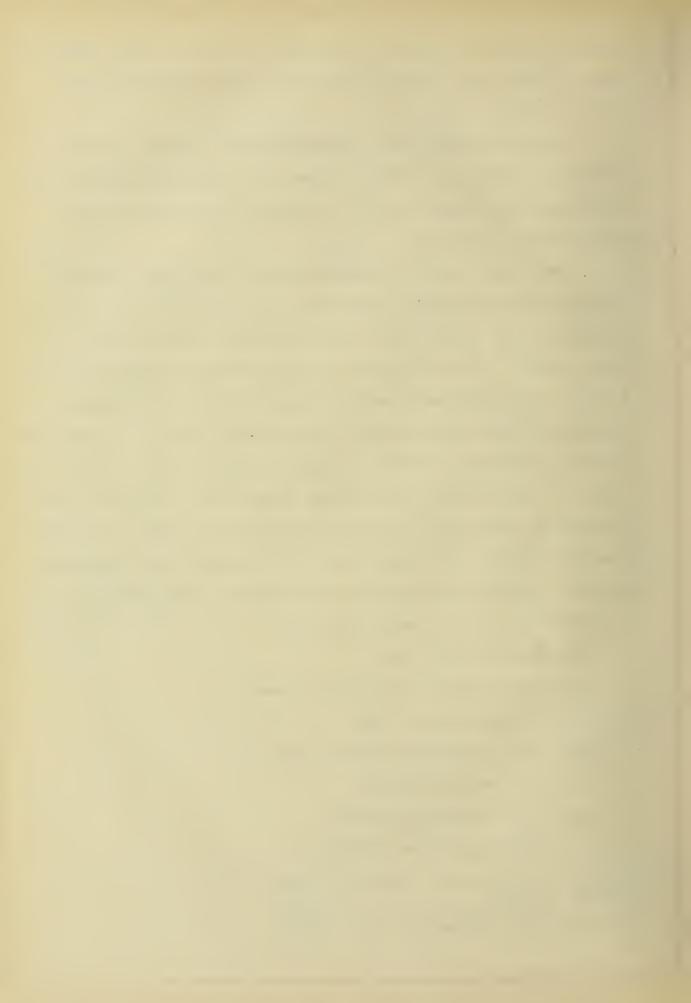
In secret where he died."4

lWorks, Brit. Classics, Vol.I, P. 348.

2 Ibid, P. 353

3 " P. 379-84.

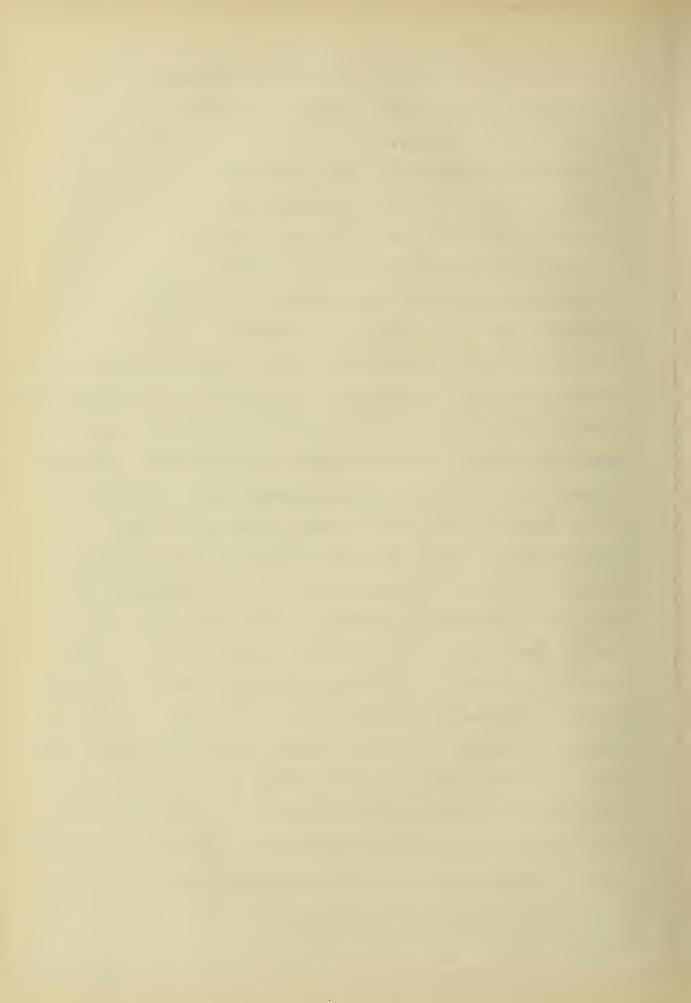
4 Works, Brit. Classics, Vol. I. P.31.



Valerio describes Elmire in almost the same words:
Sie ist wohl zu beklagen. Seit der gute Jüngling
Der sie so sehr geliebt, und dem sie selbst
Sich heimlich widmete,
Durch Kalte, scheinende Verachtung viel
Gequält, zuletzt er micht mehr trug und
Fort in alle Welt, Gott weisz wohin, entfloh:
Seitdem verfolgt und foltert der Gedanke
Ihr Innerstes, welch eine Seele sie
Gequält, und welche Liebe sie verschertzt." 1

To Goldsmith's influence may also be attributed the love of children or rather the method of treating the child in literature shown in Gotz, Werther, Wilhelm Meister, and Hermann und Dorothea. In both The Traveler and The Deserted Village allusions are made to children and childish sports, while the devotion of Dr. Primrose to his little ones, is one of his most charming traits. One of the most touching displays of this affection is found in his description of the burning of his house. Upon returning at midnight to his home, he found it a mass of flames, and his wife and sons running out wild with terror. He proceeds: "I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked around me for my two little ones, but they were not to be seen. O misery! 'Where,' cried I, 'are my little ones?' 'They are burned to death,' says my wife calmly, 'and I will die with them! Just then I heard the cry of the babes within and nothing could have stopped me. 'Where are my children? cried I, rushing thru the flames and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined.

l Werke, Weimar Vol. XI, P. 290



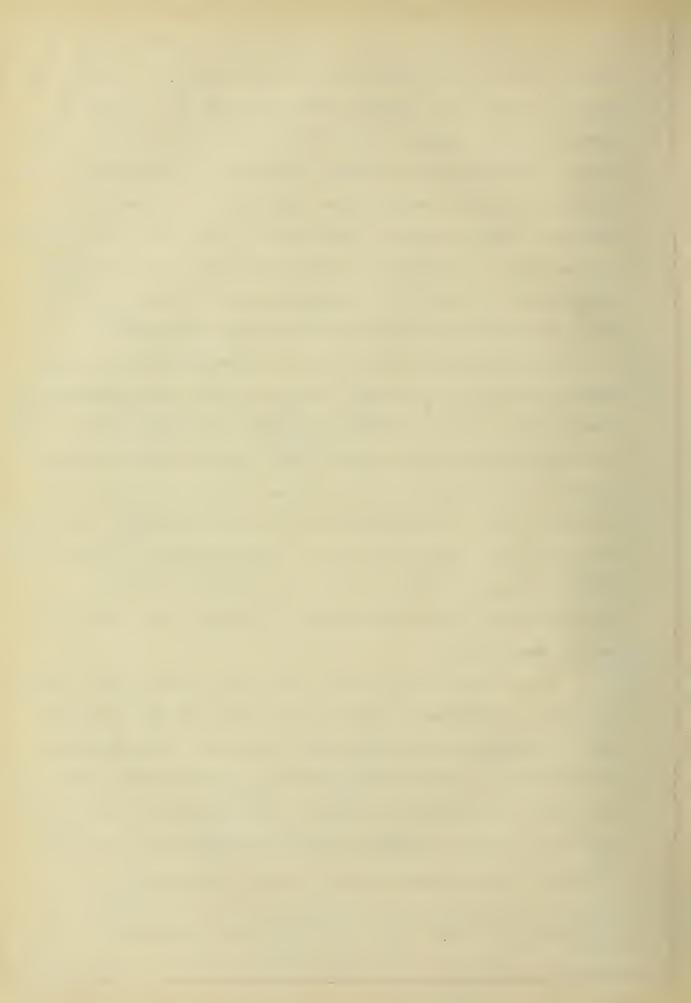
Here, dear papa, here we are! cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them thru the fire as fast as possible, while just as I was well out the roof sunk in . Now cried I, holding up my children, now let the flames burn on and all my possessions perish. Here they are! I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy. We kissed our little darlings a thousand times, they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns."

The description of the fire in Wilhelm Meister is very plainly colored by this one: "Mignon sturzte in das Zimmer und rief: Meister rette das Haus! Es brennt! Wilhelm sprang vor der Thure und im gewaltiger Rauch drängte sich die obere Treppe herunter ihm entgegen. Auf der Gasse hörte man schon das Feuer Geschrei, und der Harfenspieler kam, sein Instrument in der Hand, durch den Rauch athemlos die Treppe herunter. Aurelie stürzte aus ihrem Zimmer und warf den kleinen Felix in Wilhelms Arme. 'Retten Sie das Kind!' rief sie; wir wollen nach dem Übrigen greifen.

Er gab dem Alten das Kind, und befahl ihm mit den Hindern im Freien zu bleiben. Er selbst drang durch den Rauch hinauf; aber vergebens setzte er sich der Gefahr aus. Doch sprach er ihnen Muth ein, und rief nach Wasser: er beschwor sie, der Flamme nur Schritt vor Schritt zu weichen, und versprach, bei ihnen zu bleiben. In diesem Augenblick sprang Mignon herauf und rief:

'Meister! rettet deinen Felix! Der Alte ist rasend!'

¹ Goldsmith's Works, Vol. I, P. 408. Brit. Classics.

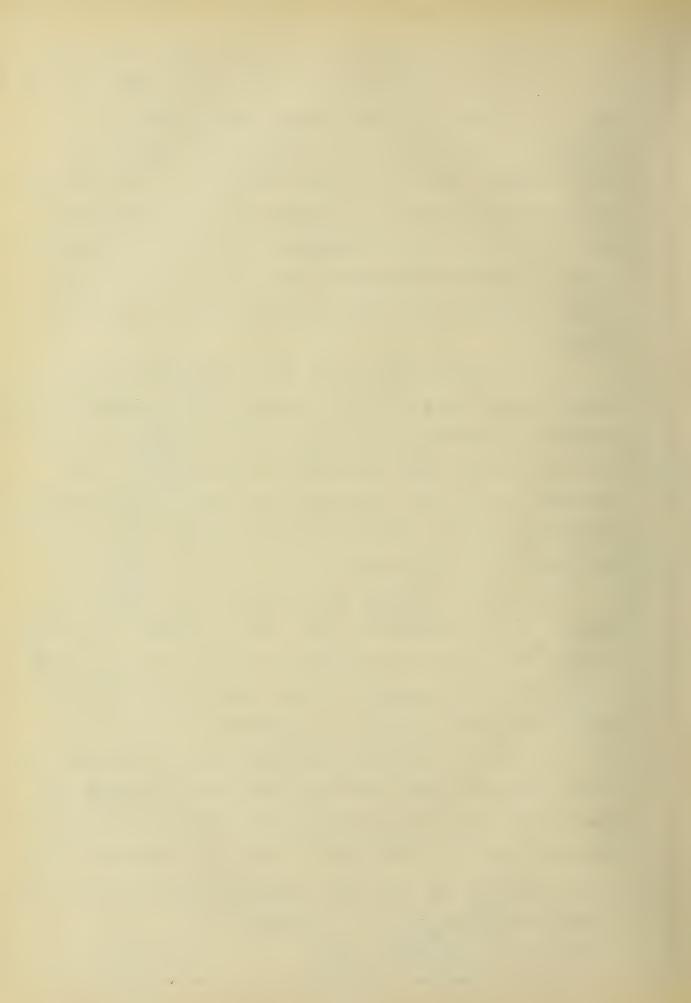


Wilhelm sprang die Treppe hinab und Mignon folgte ihm an den Fersen. Auf den letzten Stufen, die in's Gartengewölbe führten, blieb er mit Entsetzen stehen. Grosze Bündel Stroh und Reisholz, die man daselbst auf gehäuft hatte, brannten mit heller Flamme: Felix lag am Boden und Schrie.---- Wilhelm besah das Kind beim roten Schein der Flamme: er konnte keine Wunde, kein Blut, je keine Beule wahrnehmen. Er betastete es überall, es gab kein Zeichen von Schmerz von sich, es beruhigte sich vielmehr nach und nach, und fing an sich über die Flamme zu verwundern.

Wilhelm dachte nicht an die Kleider und was er sonst verloren haben konnte; er fühlte stark wie werth ihm diese beide menschliche Geschöpfen seien, die er einer so groszen Gefahr entronnen sah. Er drückte den Kleinen mit einer ganz neuen Empfindung an sein Herz, und wollte auch Mignon, mit freudiger Zärtlichkeit umarmen, die es aber sanft ablehnte, ihm bei der Hand nahm und sie fest hielt."

Gotz of the iron hand, fierce warrior that he was, loved dearly, not only his own son, Karl, but also Georg, "den Helden Knaben." Almost with his last breath he gasps: "Georg ist tot! Er war der beste Junge unter der Sonne und tapfer. Selbitz starb, und der gute Kaiser, und Mein Georg."

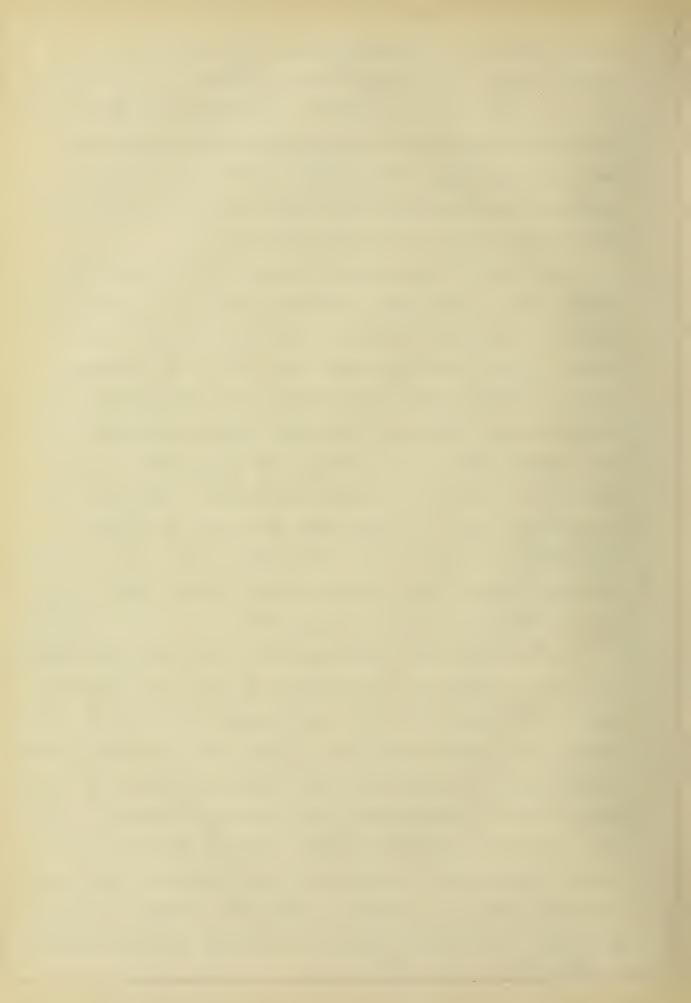
This love of children is much more evident in Werther than in Gotz. We have already seen with what care he portrays the first sight of Lotte's Geschwister. His further relations with them are described in the letter of June 29: "Vorgestern kam der Medikus hier aus der Stadt hinaus zum Amtmann und fand mich 1 Werke, Weimar Ed. Vol. 22, P. 213-217



auf der Erde, unter Lottens Kindern, wie einige auf mir herumkrabbelten, andere mich neckten, und wie ich sie kitzelte und ein grosses Geschrei verführte. Der Doktor fand dieses unter der Würde eines gescheiten Menschen; das merkte ich an seiner Nase. Ich liesz mich aber in nichts stören lasz ihn sehr vernünftige Sache abhandeln und baute den Kindern ihre Kartenhäuser wieder die sie zerschlagen hatten -----

Ja, lieber Wilhelm, meinem Herzen sind die Kinder am nächsten auf der Erde. Wenn ich ihnen zusehe, und in dem kleinen Dinge die Keime aller Tugenden, aller Kräfte sehe, die sie einmal so nöthig brauchen werden; wenn ich in dem Eigensinne kunftige Standhaftigkeit und Festigkeit des Charakters in dem Mutwillen guten Humor und Leichtigkeit über die Gefahren der Welt hinzuschlüpfen, erblicke alles so unverdorben, so ganz: immer, immer wiederhole ich dann die goldenen Worte des Lehrers der Menschen! Wenn ihr nicht werdet wie eines von diesen--- Guter Gott von deinem Himmel! Alte Kinder siehst du, und junge Kinder und nichts weiter, und an welchen du mehr Freude hast, das hat dein Sohn schon lange verkundigt."

His relations with the children of his landlady at Wahlheim were quite as familiar as with these. We have already seen how great an impression they made upon him when he first, by accident, discovered their home. He thus describes their further acquaintance: "Die Kinder sind ganz an mich gewöhnt: sie kriegen Zucker wenn ich Kaffee trinke, und theilen das Butterbrot und die saure Milch mit mir des Abends. Sonntage fehlt ihnen der Kreuzer nie, und wenn ich nicht nach der Detstunde da bin, so hat die Wirtin Ordre ihn auszuzahlen. Sie sind vertrant, erzählen mich allerhand, und besonders ergötze ich mich an ihren Leidenschaften 1 Werke Weimar, Vol. VIII, P. 40.



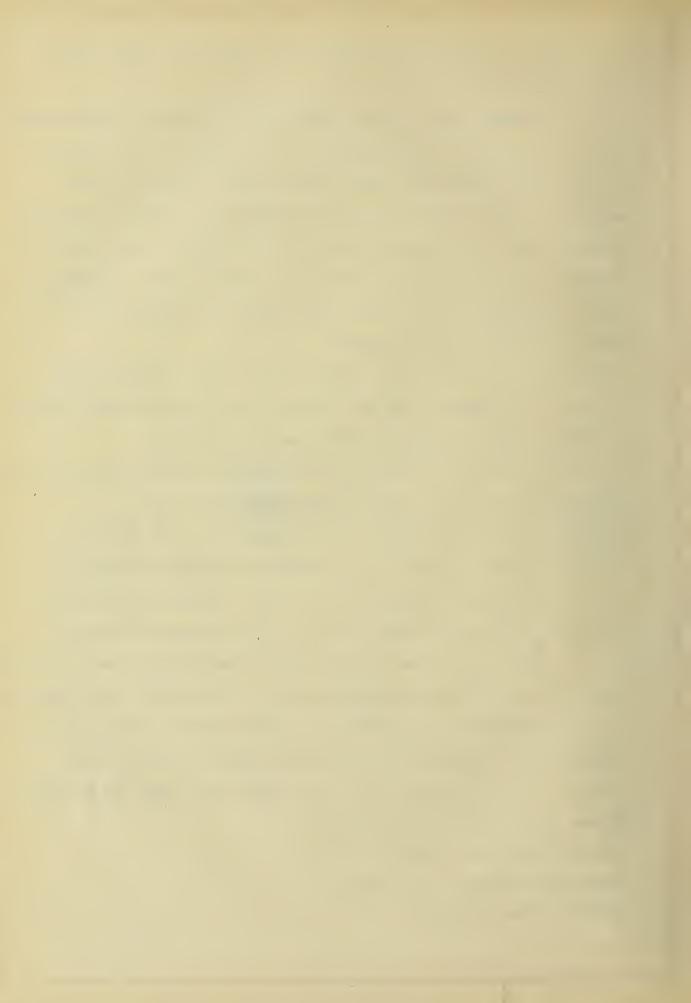
und simpeln Ausbrüchen des Begehrens, wenn mehr Kinder aus dem Dorfe sich versammeln."

In Hermann und Dorothea this love of children is manifested in the character of Dorothea and her relations to the children of her fellow fugitives. When Hermann first saw her she was caring for the infant child of "die Wöchnerin." Later, when she returned with him from the spring, the children came to meet her: "Auf Dorotheen sprengen sie dann, und grüszten sie freundlich, Brot verlangend und Obst, vor allem aber zu trinken."2

"Da fielen die Kinder mit Schreien und entsetzlichen Weinen
Ihr in die Kleider, und wollten die zweite Mutter nicht lassen.
Aber ein' und die andere Weiber sagte gebietend:
Stille, Kinder! sie geht in die Stadt und bringt euch des guten
Zuckerbrotes genug, das euch der Bruder bestellte,
Als der Storch ihn jungst beim Zuckerbäcker vorbeitrug,
Und ihr sehet sie bald mit den schon vergoldeten Deuten.
Und so lieszen die Kinder sie los, und Hermann entrisz sie
Noch den Umarmungen kaum und den fernewinkenden Tüshern."3

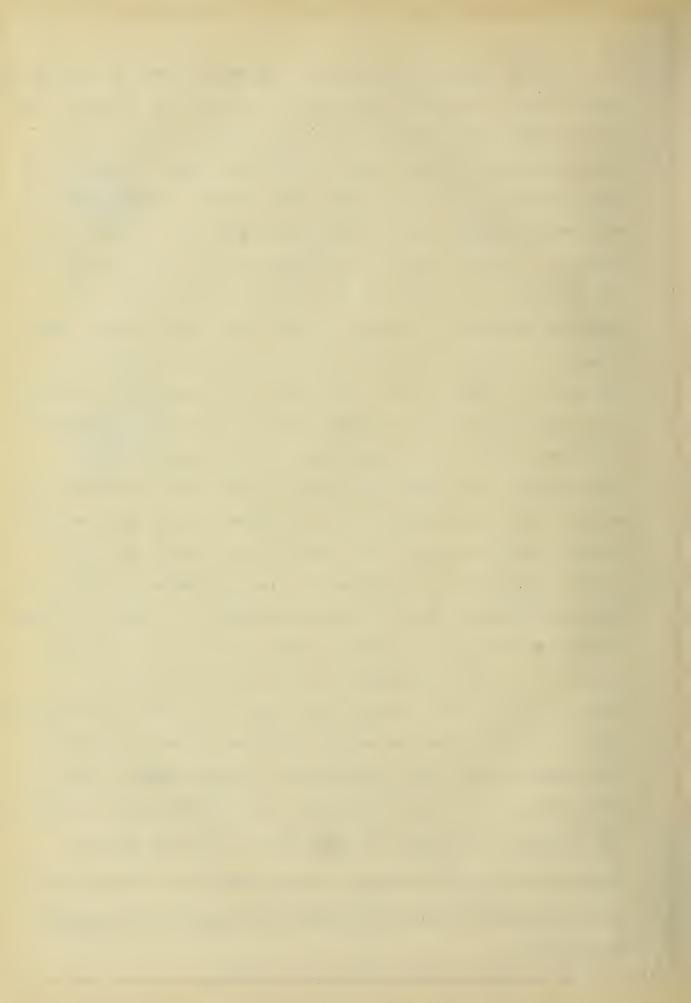
I think no one has as yet called attention to the influence upon Goethe of the clerical character as illustrated by Goldsmith in Dr. Primrose and the preacher in The Deserted Village, yet by Goethe's own confession the impression made was very great indeed. It was so great that in no fewer than three of his own books, the character is introduced.

1 Werke Weimar, Vol. XIX, P. 20
2 Siebenter Gesang, lines 139-140
3 Ibid, lines 196-204.



He says: "Ein protestantischer Landgeistlicher ist vielleicht der schönste Gegenstand einer modernen Idylle; er erscheint, wie Melchisedech, als Priester und Konig in einer Person. An den unschuldigsten Zustand, der sich auf Erden denken läszt, an den des Ackermanns, ist er meistens durch gleiche Beschäftigung, so wie durch gleiche Familienverhaltnisse geknüpft; er ist Vater, Hausherr, Landmann und so vollkommen ein Glied der Gemeine. Ihm ist übergeben, die Menschen in's Leben zu führen, für ihre geistige Erziehung zu sorgen, sie bei allen Haupt-Epochen ihres Daseins zu segnen, sie zu belehren, zu kraftigen, zu trosten, und wenn die Trost für die Gegenwart nicht ausreicht, die Hoffnung einer glücklicheren Zukunft heranzurufen und zu verburgen. Denke man sich einen solchen Mann, mit sein menschlichen Gesinnungen, stark genug, nur unter keinen Umständen davon weichen, und schon dadurch über die Menge erhaben, von der man Reinheit und Festigkeit nicht erwarten kann; gebe man ihm zu seinem Amte nothigen Kentnisse, so wie eine heitere gleiche Thatigkeit, welche so gar leidenschaftlich ist, indem sie keinen Augenblick versaumt das Gute zu wirken- und man hat ihn wohl ausgestattet haben. Zugleich aber füge man die nothige Beschranktheit hinzu, das er nicht allein in einem kleinen Kreise verharren, sondern auch allenfals in einen kleineren übergehen moge: man verleihe ihm Gutmuthigkeit, Versohnlichkeit, Standhaftigkeit, und was sonst noch aus einem entschiedenen Charakter Lobliches hervorspringt, und über dies alles eine heitere Nachgiebigkeit und lachelnde Duldung eigner und fremder Fehler: so hat man das Bild unseres trefflichen Wakefield so ziemlich beisammen."1

1 Goethe'e Werke, Weimer, Vol. 27, P. 341-3



We have previously noted how Geothe's recollections of the Sesenheim family were colored by the reading of this book, tho he admitted that the head of the household could scarcely be compared with Dr. Primrose. "But," he asks, "where can we find a man worthy to be compared with him?"

The clergyman motif is doubled in Wilhelm Meister. In (Book II, Chapter 9) the first case, Wilhelm and his fellow actors are out for a day's pleasure when they are joined by a country parson of very superior appearance. He continues with them thruout the day, gives them much good advice on diverse subjects and disappears very mysteriously.

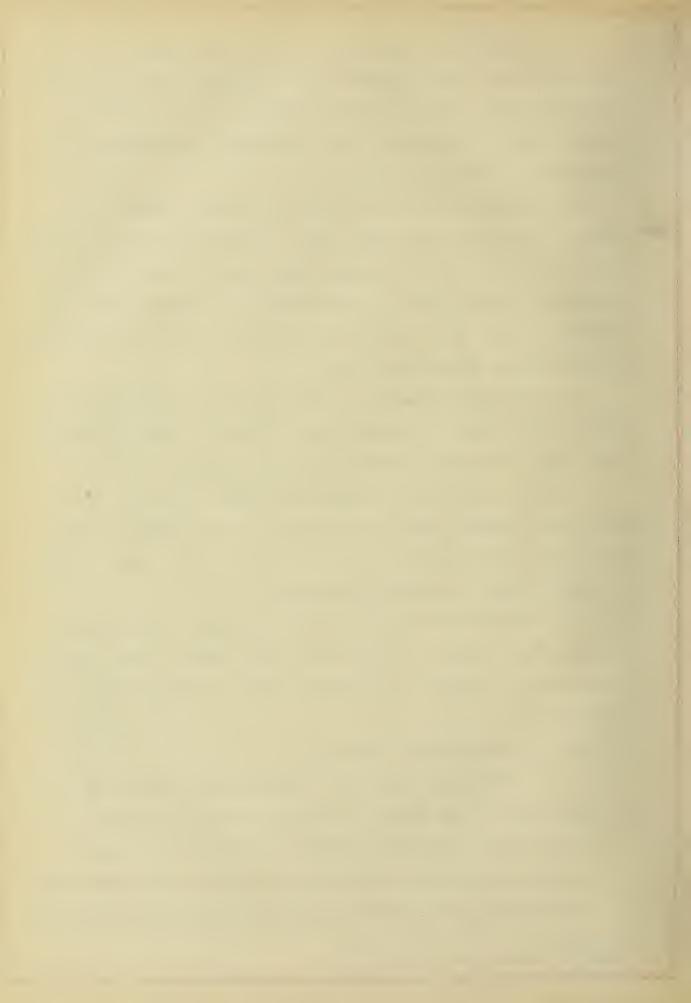
The second clergyman is a man of similar type, also resident in the country, to whose care Wilhelm consigns the Harper, whose mind has become deranged. (Book V, Chapter XVI.)

In Werther we find "der ehrliche Pfarrer von St. --," an aged country parson, who has grown old in the service of his Master and is spending his declining years in the shade of the nut trees around the humble parsonage.

A far greater creation than any of these is the minister in Mermann und Dorothea. He has the kindliness of heart, and the lively human interest of the Vicar, with the addition of worldly wisdom. He is: "

"Der edle verständige Pfarrherr,

Er, der Zierde der Stadt, ein Jungling näher dem Manne,
Dieser kannte das Leben und kannte der Hörer Bedürfnis,
War vom hohen Werte der heiligen Schriften durchdrungen
Die uns der Menschen Geschick enthüllen und ihre Gesinnung,
Und so kannt er auch wohl die besten weltlichen Schriften."1



He is spoken of as "Der würdige Pfarrer," "Der gute Pfarrer,"
"Der treffliche Pfarrer, und milde."

When Hermann would go wooing, he relied upon the wisdom of the parson to speed his cause, and when a misunderstanding arose it was to the parson that he again turned for help.

Like Goldsmith's parsons, this one of Goethe's was famed for his generosity, for we read that during his visit to the fugitives: "Der Geistliche zog ein Goldstück, das Silber

des Beutels

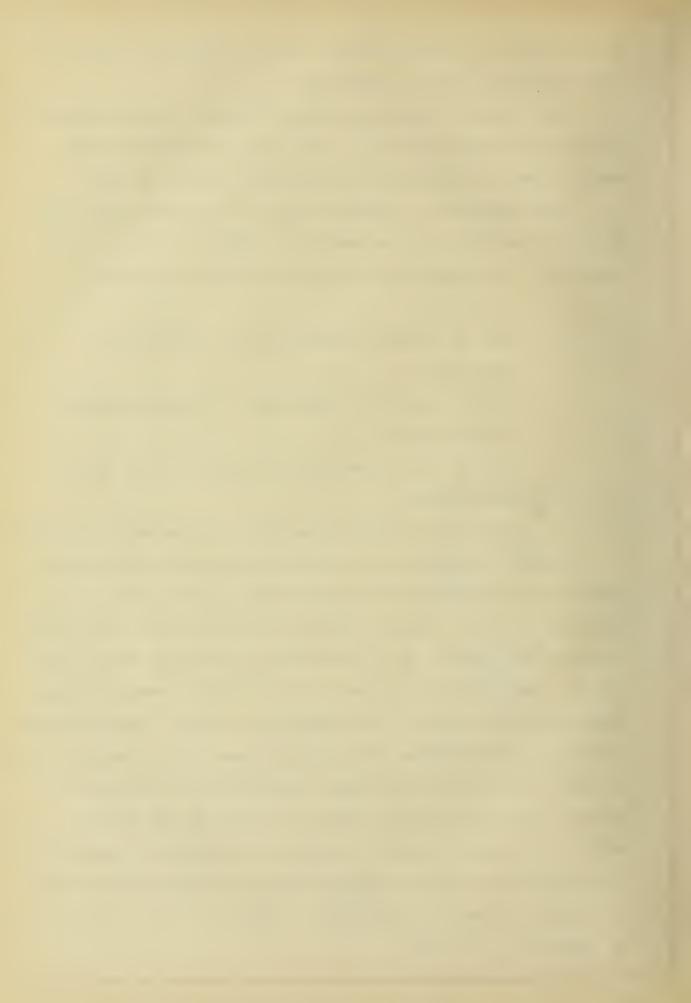
War von einigen Stunden von ihm schon milde gespendet,

Als er die Flüchtlingen sah in traurigen Haufen vorbeiziehen,

Und er reicht' es dem Schulzen und sagte 'Teilet den Pfennig

Siegmund Levy calls attention to the gentle irony found alike in The Vicar and in Wilhelm Meister, and he says, in no other novel of the century. It might be dangerous to claim this "Wohlwollende Ironie" as a Goldsmithian influence, were it not for the fact that it is evident only in those works of Goethe that show other traces of Goldsmith, viz. Goetz, Wilhelm Meister, and Hermann und Dorothea. This claim is one that is very difficult to substantiate, since the humor itself is of so intangible a nature, yet the resemblance must be evident to any careful student of the two authors. It is mild and kindly, running like a silver thread thru the entire texture of Wilhelm Meister as

- 1 Sechster Gesang, L. 192-196
- 2 Jahrbuch, VI, P. 284



well as The Vicar, appearing occasionally as bright spots amid the tempestuous scenes of Gotz von Berlichingen, and shining steadily in the simple scenes of village life found in Hermann und Dorothea. In Goldsmith it ranges from pure nonsense such as is found in the Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog and A Haunch of Venison, to the gentle irony of Retaliation, and the lively sarsasm of A Citizen of the World. Goethe has no such variety. His humor is mildly ironical, with the exception of the biting sarcasm found in Faust.

Closely allied with, if not actually a part of this element of humor, is the use of short, pithy, epigrammatic sayings in which is embodied the life wisdom of the two men. These are found chiefly in The Vicar and Hermann und Dorothea. Let me cite a few of them. "One virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence, too often the only one that is left us at seventy two." "That virtue that requires to be ever guarded is scarce worth the sentinel." "Conscience is a coward, and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent, it seldom has justice enough to accuse." "Sir, the learned world said nothing to my paradoxes. Every man of them was employed in praising his friends and himself, and as I had neither, I suffered the cruelest mortification, neglect." "That single effort by which we stop short in the down hill path to perdition, is itself a greater exertion of virtue than an hundred acts of justice."

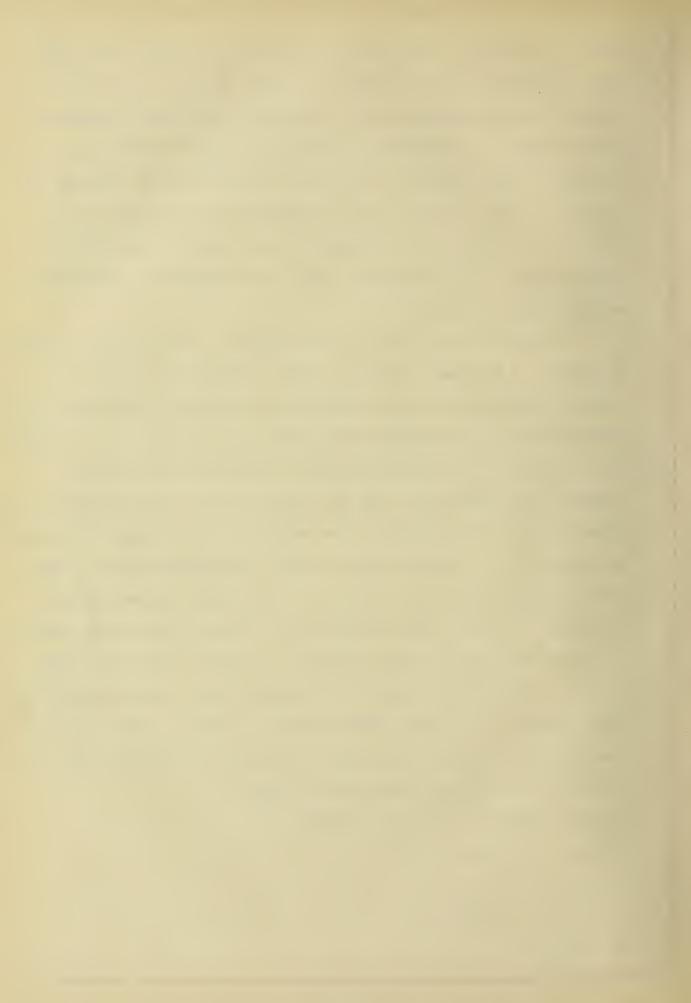
¹ Brit. Classics, Vol. I., P. 305.

² Ibid, P. 318.

^{3 &}quot; P 352.

^{4 &}quot; 7. 389.

^{5 &}quot;

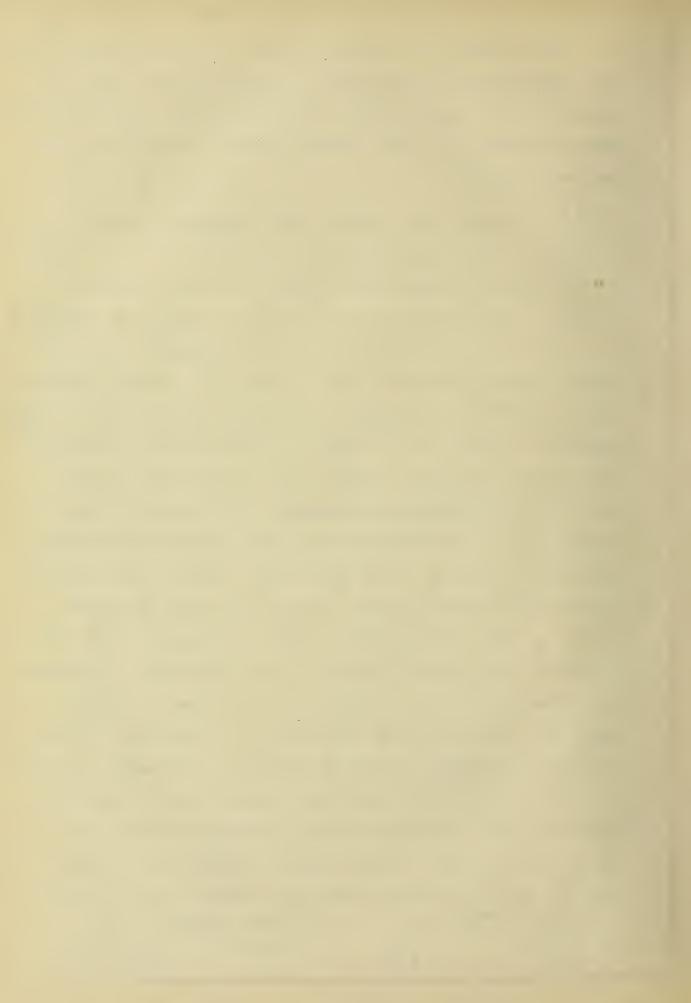


From Hermann und Dorothea we have: "Was im Menschen nicht ist, kommt auch nicht aus ihm." Ein geschäftiges Weib tut keine Schritte vergebens." "Wer lange bedenkt, der wählt nicht immer das Beste." "Aller Zustand ist gut, der naturlich ist und vernünftig."

"Eh' du Scheffel Salz mit dem neuen Bekannten verzehret,
Darfst du nicht leichtlich ihm trauen," 5

"Wir können die Kinder nach unseren Sinne nicht formen:
So wie Gott sie uns gab, so musz man sie haben und lieben." 6

In addition to all these general influences, there are numerous special cases, to many of which Mr. Levy has already called attention: for example the influence upon Werther of The Deserted Village. This is found in the mood of mild melancholy that pervades them both, rather than in any specific thing. Goethe says in Dichtung und Wahrheit: "Ein kleines Gedicht welches wir in unsern engern Kreis mit Leidenschaft aufnahmen, liesz uns von nun an nichts Anders mehr beachten. Das Deserted Village von Goldsmith muszte Jedermann auf jener Bildungsstufe, in jenem Jesinnungskreise hochlich zusagen. Nicht als lebendig oder wirksam, sondern als ein vergangenes, verschwundenes Dasein wird Alles das geschildert, was man so gern mit Augen sah, was man liebte, schätzte, in der Gegenwart leidenschaftlich aufsuchte, um jugendlich munter Teil daran zu nehmen. Test und Feiertage auf dem Lande, Kirchweihen und Jahrmarkte, dabei unter der Dorflinde erst die ernste Versammlung der Aeltesten, verdrängt von der heftigern Tanzlust der Jungern, und wol gar die Teilnahme gebildeter Stände. Vie schieklich 1 Dritter Gesang, L. 3 4 Funfter Gesang L. 12. L. 163-4 2 Vierter L. 15 5 Sechster Ibid L.105 6 Dritter L. 47-8



Landgeistlichen, der auch dasjenige was allenfalls übergriff,
was zu Händeln und zwift Anlasz geben konnte, gleich zu schlichten und abzuthun verstand. Auch hier fanden wir unsern ehrlichen
Wakefield wieder, in seinem wohlbekannten Kreise, aber nicht
mehr wie er liebte und lebte, sondern als Schatten, zurückgerufen
durch des elegischen Dichters leise Klagetöne."

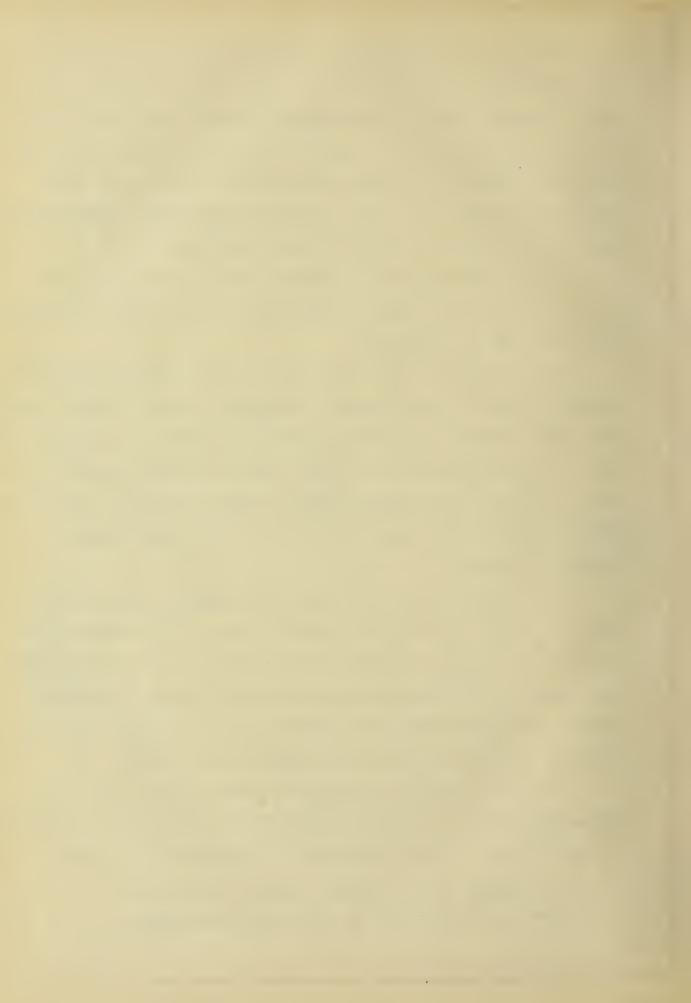
Wilhelm Meister shows a great number of these special influences. In fact I know no two books that are more alike than are this book and The Vicar.

In the character of George we recognize much of Goldsmith himself, just as we see Goethe in Wilhelm Meister. In both books the theater plays an important part. George falls in, accidently, with a traveling company. He joins them and plays successfully the role of Horatio. So Wilhelm Meister, quite by chance, encounters the troupe of Melina, casts his lot with them, and achieves success as Hamlet.

Dr. Primrose meets the theatrical company, which George has joined, and arriving with them at the inn, is taken by the landlord to be either chaplain to the company, or to be playing that part. So in Wilhelm Meister the count thinks the Harper's beard a stage property, and commends him for wearing it all day. He makes a similar mistake with regard to the pedant.

Levy also notes the similarity between Serlo, the actor and stage manager in "ilhelm Meister, and Goldsmith's description, in Retaliation, of David Garrick. Of the latter it is written:

"On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting, It was only that when he was off he was acting.



With no reason earth to go out of his way,

He turned and he twisted full ten times a day.

Tho secure of our hearts, yet confoundedly sick,

If they were not his own by finessing and trick:

He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,

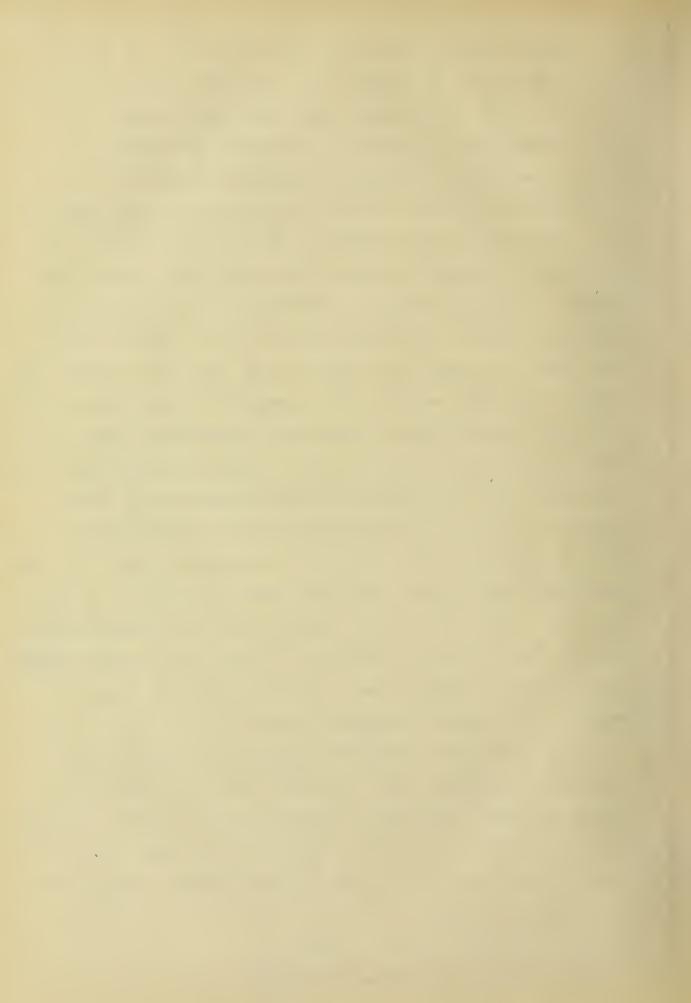
For he knew when he pleased he could whistle them back."

The following description of Serlo is sufficiently like to warrant the assumption that it was based upon the one just quoted: "Seiner Selbstigkeit war auszerst beleidigt, wenn es nicht jedem gefiel, und wenn er nicht überall Beifall erregte. Wie dieser zu erlangen sei hatte er nach und nach so genau Acht gegeben, und hatte seinen Sinn so geschärft, das er nicht allein bei seinen Darstellungen, sondern auch im gemeinen Leben nicht mehr als smeicheln konnte. Und so arbeitete seine Gemütsart, sein Talent und seine Lebensart der Gestallt wechelsweise gegen einander, dasz er sich unvermerkt zu einem vollkommenen Schauspieler ausgebildet sah. Ja, durch eine seltsam scheinende, aber ganz naturliche Wirkung und Gegenwirking stieg, durch Einsicht und Ubung, seine Recitation, Declamation und sein Gebärdenspiel, zu einer hohen Stufe der Wahrheit, Freiheit und Offenheit, indem er im Leben und Umgang, immer heimlicher kunstlicher, ja verstellt und ängstlich zu werden schien."2

Mr. Levy thinks that Tasso and Faust also show traces of Goldsmith's influence, but I think he bases this claim on too little evidence. The humor of Mephistopheles and Faust does seem to be very much like that in A Citizen of the World, but I should want to make a more careful investigation before claiming that an influence existed.

¹ Brit. Classics, Vol. I., P. 82-3

² Werke Bohlan, Vol. XXII, P. 119-120.



I think that I have offered sufficient evidence to prove that Goethe resembles Goldsmith in personality, in being, like him a Gelegenheitsdichter, in his love of liberty, his loyalty to the reigning monarchy, and in his ideas of government. I have also tried, I think successfully, to prove that certain books, Gotz von Berlichingen, Werther, Egmont, Wilhelm Meister, Erwin und Elmire, and Hermann und Dorothea, show a strong Goldsmithian influence, consisting of the introduction of the idyllic element, of the lyric, of the disguise motif, of the sympathetic treatment of the child in literature, of the character of the country clergyman, of humor, of the use of the epigram, and in addition to these, of various minor special influences.





